

## **A312A: Education Schools: Purpose, Expectations, and Impact**

**Fall 2 2021  
Gutman Room 404  
Fridays 1:00 PM - 3:45 PM ET**

### **Course Description**

In the United States, education is seen as essential to the health of the nation. Educators are responsible for creating global citizens, preparing young people for their future careers, and teaching the future innovators that drive the progress of humanity. Yet, for the past 200 years, the public discourse has not been kind to teachers. Politicians, civil servants, parents, and academics often see them as low-achieving and poorly-trained, and education policy reflects this distrust. American teachers have less control over how they teach compared to their international counterparts.

This course focuses on one aspect of this problem: the role of education schools in this larger American context. How did they develop into their current form? What should we expect from our education schools? How do the conflicting expectations of what an education school should be shape them? As a class, we will work through these and other questions to think through what we want education schools to be, how we can advocate for them to get there, and our own time at HGSE and beyond.

Weekly activities include large and small-group discussions of readings, guest speakers, and lecturettes on the history of education schools. Students will participate actively in class discussions, write 200-word reflections on Canvas each week, and complete a final paper on the future of education schools.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **After completing this course, learners will be able to:**

- Make a well-substantiated argument for what American education schools can do to improve.
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the history of US education schools and the extent to which this history is rooted in a distinctively American understanding of education.
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the competing expectations for schools of education from different stakeholders, and how these expectations shape these schools.
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the complex relationship between graduate schools of education, other professional schools, and their parent universities.
- Think critically about their time at HGSE, and how to apply this education to their post-HGSE careers.

## Expectations, Assignments, and Assessment

### Attendance and Preparation

The first and most important expectation for this course is regular and prepared attendance. All required readings should be completed prior to the live session for which they are assigned. In addition, you should spend time reflecting on and drawing connections between the materials. Because this is a half-semester course, it is essential to attend every week. If you must miss a class, please reach out to me to discuss ways to contribute to the session that you did not attend.

### Written Assignments

The written assignments for the course comprise the weekly reflection posts and a final paper.

***Final Paper Proposal.*** A description or draft of your final paper (at least 1,000 words), is due on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM. This assignment will be graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory and is meant to be an opportunity to get feedback on the direction of your paper and your writing. Our class on November 11<sup>th</sup> will include one-on-one meetings with me to talk through your thinking.

***Final Paper.*** You will also complete a final project of 2,000-5,500 words that will draw on outside sources to analyze a political problem, debate, or decision of your choice. When it is feasible, you are encouraged to conduct interviews with stakeholders involved in the topic you write about as part of your research. These projects will typically take the form of a policy proposal or research paper, but you are welcome to propose an alternative format (e.g., presentation slides and a script or a video), particularly if that alternative product will be useful to you in your professional role. The paper itself should be submitted by 5pm ET on December 14. Detailed expectations for final projects will be available on Canvas and discussed in live sessions.

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# Class Participation

Beyond attendance, all students should be ready to participate actively in class and in our online discussion posts. I encourage students who are reluctant to speak in whole-class discussions to demonstrate their engagement in other ways, for example by responding to the posts of other students, attending office hours, or corresponding with me by email.

# Grading

Course grades will be calculated as follows:

Attendance and Participation: 30%:

Paper Proposal: 20%

Final Paper/Brief: 50%

## Policies

# Class Communication

I welcome your questions, comments, and feedback by email throughout the semester. I will respond to email messages within 24 hours Monday through Friday. Weekend messages may not be returned until Monday.

**Syllabus Updates.** Any changes to the materials assigned to prepare for class will be implemented at least one week before the class for which they are assigned. Any other changes to course policies will be announced on Canvas and via email to your Harvard address.

**Office Hours.** My set office hours are on Wednesday from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, but meeting in-person is tricky because of the pandemic. I am open to meeting with you inside, but if you would prefer to meet outside, that is also an option (weather permitting) I am open to meeting with you outside. If you would rather talk via Zoom, that is always an option as well! Beyond my “official” office hours on Wednesday, you can reach out to me to schedule office hours most days of the week. Please e-mail me to schedule a time outside of my office hours if that is easier for you.

# Class Norms

All participants in this course are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Harvard Graduate School of Education policies, including standards of conduct, detailed in the [Student Handbook](#). In particular, note that we strive to create a welcoming and inclusive community for all students. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, religious intolerance, and other forms of discrimination, in any form, will not be tolerated.

Establishing a comprehensive set of norms to accomplish this goal and support learning across lines of difference will be an ongoing process that we will engage in together over the course of the semester. As we start that process, the teaching team encourages you to consider the following principles to guide your interactions in small-group and whole-class discussions:

- Be polite, generous, and respectful. Suggest resources or ideas that may help others in their learning. When disagreements arise, allow others the benefit of the doubt—valuing deeper insight and communication over trying to prove yourself right.
- Ask questions, raise alternative viewpoints, and encourage your peers to do the same. Make explicit connections between course concepts and readings, your first-hand experience, and the experiences of others in the course. You may also ask your peers to tell you more about the "why" behind their ideas—helping them clarify their thoughts, uncover inconsistencies or misconceptions, and take their understanding to a new level.
- Be mindful of your impact, not just your intent. Part of being a member of a learning community is holding each other accountable to the values of that community. If someone calls you out for saying or doing something that violates those values—for example, for a perceived microaggression—take the impact of your words or actions seriously. If this happens, try to receive any feedback graciously, reflect on what happened and if there's any harm that needs to be repaired, and use the experience to learn for the future.

## **Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Our teaching team is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment for all students, including those with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and think you may need additional accommodations or modifications, please make an appointment with KellyAnn Robinson ([kellyann\\_robinson@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:kellyann_robinson@gse.harvard.edu)) in the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) to review your accommodation and discuss any additional supports. You may also schedule an appointment at [https://calendly.com/kellyann\\_robinson](https://calendly.com/kellyann_robinson).

Note that OSA also has supports available for any student experiencing stress, anxiety, or other challenges. We encourage you to take advantage of those supports as needed.

## **Academic Integrity**

The exchange of ideas is essential to both academic and professional work. At the same time, the work you submit to meet course requirements must be your own. In completing this work, you should be careful to distinguish between ideas that are your own and those that have been derived from other sources. Quotations must be properly placed within quotation marks and must be fully cited. All paraphrased material must also be cited. In all cases where ideas or material presented are derived from your reading and research, the source used must be indicated. If you receive specific help with your writing (e.g., edits or feedback on drafts), you

should acknowledge this assistance. Whether or not you have received such assistance will not influence the evaluation of your work. Students who submit work either not their own or without clear attribution to the original source, for whatever reason, face sanctions up to and including dismissal and expulsion.

For additional information about appropriate citation and paraphrasing, please visit these resources:

- Gutman Library APA Tutorial <http://bit.ly/2ZNj6NO>
- Gutman Library Paraphrasing Tutorial <http://bit.ly/2XPxhQK>
- Purdue OWL Paraphrasing Resource: <https://bit.ly/1uTeH5h>

If you have any questions about appropriate citation formats, please contact me.

## Class Topics and Readings

The remainder of this syllabus provides the topics covered and the readings assigned for each week. Readings listed as “additional resources” are not required but are available to students interested in additional perspectives or evidence on the relevant topic. All other readings should be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned. Note that the reading list may be revised during the semester to incorporate newly published research and ongoing developments. Any changes will be implemented on this syllabus and on the module page in Canvas.

### Week 1 (Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>): Intro to Education Schools in the U.S. context

Clifford, G. J., & Guthrie, J. W. (1988). *Ed school : a brief for professional education*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5

Moss, D. M., Glenn, W. J., & Schwab, R. L. (2004). *Portrait of a Profession: Teaching and Teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Praeger. Introduction

Labaree, D. F. (2004). *The trouble with ed schools*. Yale Univ. Press. Intro

Levine, Arthur, *Educating Leaders Executive Summary*.

Levine, Arthur, *Educating Teachers Executive Summary*.

Levine, Arthur, *Educating Researchers*. Pages 5-17.

### Week 2 (October 29<sup>th</sup>) What is a Profession? Education Schools in the Context of Professional Graduate Schools

Abbott, A. D. (1988). *The system of professions : an essay on the division of expert labor*. University of Chicago Press. Introduction

Khurana, R. (2007). *From higher aims to hired hands :the social transformation of American business schools and the unfulfilled promise of management as a profession*. Princeton University Press. Introduction and Chapter 5

Brint, Steven. *Professional Responsibility in an Age of Experts and Large Organizations*.

## Week 3 (Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>). Who are the constituents of an Ed School? What do they want?

*Labaree, D. F. (2004). The trouble with ed schools. Yale Univ. Press. Chapter 3*

*Loss, C. P. (2011). Between citizens and the state. In Princeton University Press. Princeton Univ. Press. p. 121-146*

*Excerpts from the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) and statements to US Congress*

## Week 4 (Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>): The History of HGSE

*Powell, A. G. (1980). The uncertain profession : Harvard and the search for educational authority. Harvard University Press: Excerpts*

*Keller, M., & Keller, P. (2020). Making Harvard modern. Oxford University Press. 110-134*  
*Excerpts from HGSE archives*

## Week 5 (Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>): The Perception of Education Schools in the U.S.

Three articles from the Chronicle of Higher Education

Excerpts from speeches in US congress and MA legislature (especially on UMass Boston)

*Kramer, R. (1991). Ed school follies : the miseducation of America's teachers. Free Press ; Maxwell Macmillan Canada. Introduction*

*Labaree, D. F. (2004). The trouble with ed schools. Yale Univ. Press. Chapter 8*

## Week 6 (Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>): The U.S. education system in an international context

*Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). The flat world and education : how America's commitment to equity will determine our future. Teachers College Press. Chapter 1*

*Sahlberg, P. (2021). Finnish Lessons 3. 0. Teachers College Press. p. 20-56*

*Mehta, J. (2013). The allure of order : high hopes, dashed expectations, and the troubled quest to remake American schooling. Oxford University Press. Chapter 6*

*Lareau, A. (2011). Unequal childhoods : class, race, and family life (2nd ed., with an update a decade later.). University of California Press. Chapter 10*

## Week 7 (TBA): The Future of Ed Schools

Bridget Terry Long's statement on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of HGSE



