EDUC 231B. Perspectives on Education--Fall 2009

Bronwyn Sale
Office: Pettingill 306, Phone: 786-8378
bsale@bates.edu
Office hours: Thursdays 10:00am-11:00am and by appointment

Class meets: Hathorn 104, Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00-9:20

Bates College Department of Education Mission Statement:

The Bates College Department of Education seeks to foster the democratic possibilities of schooling through the study of American public education and other comparative systems. The aim of the department is to create an environment in which students and faculty together analyze the complex dynamics between the purposes and products of schooling, and the social structures and cultural processes that comprise the broader context for education. In particular, we want to nurture in our students the development of these qualities:

- **Critical action and civic responsibility** – Because we want our students to develop a sense of social responsibility and concern for the common good, we encourage them to be involved in the local community and beyond through field work, service learning projects, policy analysis, student teaching, and empirical research.
- **Reflection and engagement** – In our vision of education, reflection and engagement work together to deepen students’ understanding and foster their personal growth.
- **Imagination and a passion for learning** – With imagination, a passion for learning, and the skills and knowledge that we help them develop, our students are well prepared to pursue their interests in education.
- **Commitment to social justice** – Throughout our program, we encourage students to recognize and address the influence of social context on the democratic possibilities of schooling.

Course Introduction:
This course is an introduction to the many perspectives--anthropological, historical, philosophical, psychological, and sociological--through which education can be viewed and their relation to the realities present in schools and classrooms. The essential question addressed by the course is: What should be the purpose of education in a democratic society? In addition to studying various viewpoints you will have the opportunity to reflect on course content as well as explore the possibility of teaching as a career, through a community based learning placement in a local public school.
Course Goals:

Analyze the state of American education today and understand what led to our current system

Understand and reflect upon differing views of education as well as its purposes and goals in a society

Analyze teaching and learning, current educational trends, educational dilemmas, and educational philosophies, in the context of a real school

Construct a personal vision for what an “ideal” education and equal educational opportunity might look like

Develop informed opinions about teaching, learning, educational dilemmas, and controversies

Explore teaching as a possible calling, and profession*

* This course is the first required course in the sequence of courses leading to a minor in educational studies, or in Teacher Education that leads to certification in Maine as a teacher for grades 7-12. If you are interested in either option, please discuss specific requirements with an Education faculty member before the end of the semester.

Required Course Texts:

E.D. Hirsch, The Schools We Need
Deborah Meier, The Power of Their Ideas
Ron Suskind, A Hope in the Unseen
Daniel Willingham, Why Don’t Students Like School?

Additional readings will be accessed through Lyceum as indicated on the syllabus or on the Lyceum Calendar.

Education Department Library: The Education Department lounge (Pettingill 316) houses a wide-ranging collection of books and journals, organized in broad topic sections. Feel free to browse there and to sign out an item by completing a check out card and filing it in the box left for that purpose on a small table in the lounge. Please cross out your name when you return the item.
Course Requirements:

- Integrated analysis and response journals: 25%
- Autobiography of self as a learner: 5%
- Educational controversy or dilemma paper and letter: 15%
- Lesson plan: 5%
- Profile of a teacher: 10%
- Active participation in field experience and class meetings: 25%
- Integrated field experience and philosophy paper: 15%

Note: the descriptions below are summaries of course requirements. Detailed instructions for each assignment below is posted on Lyceum and will be discussed in class.

**Integrated analysis and response journals:** Observations, analysis and reflections based on course readings as well as experiences in your field placement. Typically, no more than one page single-spaced. For some weeks topics may be listed on Lyceum or assigned during class--see Lyceum for format. **8 journals total are due** (one “free” week is allowed—9 journals are assigned). **First journal due date:** Tuesday, September 15.

**Autobiography of self as learner:** Written, visual, poetic or musical response. What type of learner are you? What is your best or most significant classroom, school, or learning experience? Worst? Why? **Autobiography Due Date: Tuesday September 22, in class.**

**Lesson plan:** Complete a lesson plan addressing how you would teach students (K-12) about a controversial current issue. Topic ideas and lesson plan template provided in class and/or Lyceum **Lesson plan due date: Thursday October 15.**

**Educational controversy/dilemma paper and letter:** 5 pages for paper, double-spaced 12 font. Research a current education controversy. Summarize both sides of the issue and then take a personal stand using evidence from your research, field experience, and course readings to support your point of view. Topic ideas and detailed description will be handed out in class and posted to lyceum. **Letter:** 1 page, business letter format. Write a letter, preferably to your national senators/representatives (where you are registered to vote) persuasively expressing and supporting your personal opinion about the controversy you research. **Paper and letter due date: Tuesday, November 10, in class.**
Profile of a teacher: Interview a teacher. Guidelines will be posted on Lyceum and/or handed out in class. Summarize the most salient points in writing and be prepared to share with the class. This may be done in an AV format with permission of interviewee.

Draft interview questions due with any journal by: 10/27
Interview summary and reflection due: Thursday 11/19 in class

Active, informed participation during class and Field Experience:
Complete a 30-hour Field experience (11 weeks 2-3 hours a week) in a local school. (3 hours are allowed in schools in your hometown). In order to receive full credit, completed Log sheets documenting 30 hours and an evaluation from your host teacher are due with field experience paper (see below). This category also considers the quality of your contribution to in class discussions-based upon careful reading and viewing of all course materials-as well as active, engaged participation during class learning activities. Due: All semester

Integrated Field experience and philosophy paper: 5-pages. You might think of this as the story of your class as it relates to your ideas about education. Link an analysis of your field experience to at least three of the course readings and an educational dilemma. End by grounding your personal philosophy of education in both course readings and what you observed and experienced “in the field.” Hard copy, double-spaced 12 font. Attach log sheets, teacher evaluation, and all journals to the back. Integrated paper due date: Thursday, December 10.

Important Note: Because this is your class as well as mine, I welcome any suggestions you may have about any aspect of the course. I am willing to consider alternate ways for you to demonstrate your learning. If you would like to do something in a different way, please see me to discuss your proposal. Feel free to provide feedback or share concerns at any time by sending me e-mail, meeting with me in person, or over the phone.

If you have a physical or mental disability, either hidden or visible, which may require classroom, test taking, or other reasonable modifications please see me as soon as possible.
### Course Deadlines and due dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Integrated analysis and response journals (8 total) | **Most Tuesdays.** Journal #1 Due Tuesday, September 15. HARD COPY, IN CLASS.  
Journals due: 9/15, 9/29, 10/6, 10/20, 10/27, 11/3, 11/17, and 12/1. 12/8 optional |
| Autobiography of self as a learner            | Tuesday, September 22—Bring to class                                     |
| Lesson plan                                   | Hard Copy, IN CLASS Thursday 10/15                                      |
| Educational controversy paper and letter.     | HARD COPY, IN CLASS Tuesday 11/10                                       |
| Profile of a teacher                          | Interview questions due with any journal by 10/27.  
Profile due: Thursday 11/19  
HARD COPY, IN CLASS  
(Video: post to Lyceum in time for class) |
| Field Experience                               | 30 hours total, with log sheets and teacher evaluation attached to final paper, due December 10. |
| Integrated field experience and philosophy paper | Due: Thursday December 10. HARD COPY IN CLASS.                           |

### Course Topics, Readings and Assignments:

*Note: Any alterations to course schedule will be posted on the electronic calendar on Lyceum. Use Lyceum for the most up to date information about assignments, course topics, films and readings.*

### Week one: Introduction to course and field placement

Thursday 9/10: Course overview.  
9:00 am Ellen Alcorn, Guest Speaker: overview of field placement and forms.
Week two: What is the purpose of school? What does it mean to be educated?

For Tuesday 9/15  Readings:  A Hope in the Unseen, Chapters 1-3.  
Hess, Frederick “What is a public school?”  Phi delta Kappan 85, no.6 2004, p. 433-439 (Lyceum).  
Nathan, Linda “A Response to Frederick Hess…”  Phi delta Kappan 85. no. 6, 2004 p. 440-441 (Lyceum).  
Journal #1 Due


8:30 am: Guest speaker Ellen Alcorn with details about school placement.  Contact your teacher immediately, and begin field placement ASAP.

For Thursday 9/17 Read Meier, Chapters 1 and 9.  

Week three: Who am I as a learner?  How do my own experiences in school influence my perception of school and learning? (Field placement)

For Tuesday 9/22  Read Willingham, Chapter 7. 
Hope in the Unseen, Chapter 4.  
No journal due.

Autobiography of self as learner due.  Be prepared to share your autobiography with others.

For Thursday 9/24  Hope in the Unseen, Chapters 5-7.
**Week four: What is taught in school? What should be?**

For Tuesday 9/29  
Hirsch, Chapters 1 and 2.  
Meier, Chapter 2.  

**Journal #2 Due**

For Thursday 10/1  
Meier, Chapter 3.  
Mahiri, J. “From 3 R’s to 3 C’s: Corporate Curriculum And Culture in Public Schools.”  
*Social Justice* 2005, Vol. 32 Issue 3, p.72-88 *(lyceum).*

Ravitch, D. “Should We Teach Patriotism?” *Phi Delta Kappan* April 2006, p1-3 *(lyceum).*

**Week 5: How do people Learn?**

For Tuesday 10/6  
Willingham, Chapters 1-4.  
**Journal #3 Due**

For Thursday 10/8  
Willingham, Chapters 5 and 6.  
*Hope in Unseen*, Chapters 8-10.

Hirsch: Critical guide to education terms and phrases p. 239-271.

**Week 6: How has school changed and evolved in the U.S.? What is a school?**

For Tuesday 10/13  
Meier, Chapter 4.  
Hirsch, Chapter 3.  

For Thursday 10/15  
*Hope in Unseen*, Chapter 11 -12  
View DVD-*School: The story of American education*  
(on reserve, Ladd Library).

**Lesson Plan Due**
Week 7: How does school in the US compare with other countries?

For Tuesday 10/20  
*(Class movie night?)*  
View and read websites, articles/videos on Lyceum. 
View DVD: 2 million minutes  
(on reserve, Ladd Library) 
**Journal #4 Due**

*Fall recess: Finish a Hope in the Unseen in preparation for week 8*

---

**Please note that all readings other than the four main course texts for weeks 8-13 will be listed on Lyceum or distributed in class.**

---

Week 8: What can influence student learning and achievement in school?

For Tuesday 10/27  
Finish a Hope in the Unseen Chapters 13-14, epilogue, afterward.  
Lareau, Annette. *Unequal Childhood: The Importance of Social Class in Family Life*.  
**See Lyceum for additional readings.**  
**Journal #5 Due**

For Thursday 10/29  
View film: “Hard times at Douglass High” on reserve at Ladd library.  
See Lyceum.

---

Week 9: What philosophies should guide education in democratic societies?

For Tuesday 11/3  
Hirsch, Chapter 4.  
See Lyceum.  
**Journal #6 Due**

For Thursday 11/5  
See Lyceum.
Week 10: A tasting: controversies in education

For Tuesday 11/10  Meier, Chapter 5. 
See Lyceum.

*Educational controversy paper and letter due*

For Thursday 11/12  Hirsch, Chapters 5 and 6. 
See Lyceum

Week 11: What does it take to be a teacher?

For Tuesday 11/17  Read Meier, Chapters 7 and 8. 
See Lyceum

*Journal #7 due*

For Thursday 11/19  Willingham, Chapters 8 and 9. 
See Lyceum

*Profile of a teacher due*

*Thanksgiving recess*

Week 12: What works? Promising strategies for equalizing educational opportunity

For Tuesday 12/1  Read Meier, Chapters 6 and 10. 
See Lyceum.

*Journal #8 Due*

For Thursday 12/3  Hirsch, Chapter 7. 
See Lyceum.

Week 13: Final week of class

For Tuesday 12/8  **What is the future of school?** 
See Lyceum.

*Optional Journal due*

Thursday 12/10  **Final class meeting:** *What is the ideal of education in a democratic society? (Is this the right question to be asking?)*  **Final papers due.**