THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
Department of Sociology

Winter 2010/2011

SOCIOLOGY 4450 G  
Education and Society

Tuesday, 9:30 – 12:30, SSC 5406

Instructor: 
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Course Description
This seminar will look at classical and contemporary theories in the sociology of education as well as recent empirical research in this area. Particular emphasis will be placed on examining (1) the relationship between educational institutions and processes and the reproduction of social inequality; and (2) the competing visions of educational reform that have been offered in recent years.

Prerequisite(s):
Enrolment in fourth year of the Honors program (old), or one of the Honors Specializations (new), or Honors Double Major in Sociology.

Note about Prerequisites and Antirequisites
Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Required Texts
No required textbooks. Readings will be made available through WebCT and in class.
Book review text: see next page
Requirements
Participation 10%
Book Review Due March 8, 2011 25%
Presentation and Reports Due March 8, 2011 20%
Term Paper Due April 5, 2011 45%

Participation
Students are expected to attend class having read the required readings, and to participate in class discussions. The course has a seminar format. Participation marks take into consideration frequency of participation, but also evidence that you have read and critically engaged with the material.

Presentation and Report
Each seminar is divided into different sections, each one led by a student. The expectation is that students present the key arguments of the assigned readings for their section, offer a critical analysis, provide additional insights from other, related sources, and lead the discussion following their presentation.
The presentation should only be a summary of the highlights, plus your additional information. As such, they should be restricted to approximately 20 minutes. After the formal presentation, you will get a chance to start discussions by providing three to four questions.
The day of (or before) your seminar presentation, you have to submit a 2-3 page summary and critical evaluation of the readings on which you present. Your critical evaluation should follow the same principle guidelines given for the book review (see below).

Book Review
You have to write a critical review of one of the following two books:


The book review is expected to be 5 to 7 pages in length, double-spaced.
Follow this guideline when preparing the book review:
• Summarize the main arguments made in the book (in two or three paragraphs)
• Evaluate the arguments based on other literature and your own assessment
• Describe what is positive and negative about the arguments put forward in the book:
  o Is the argument exhaustive?
  o Is something missing?
  o What are the strengths?
  o What are the flaws?
• Finally, how does it relate to other works (or how do other works relate to the book)
The book review is due March 8, 2011
Term Paper
You will pick a topic of your choice, but related to the course. You have to provide a critical literature review, including both theoretical perspectives and empirical research. A substantial portion of the paper has to come from sources beyond those already covered in the course readings. The paper is expected to be 10 to 15 pages in length, double spaced (approximately 3,000 to 4,000 words). Please confirm your term paper topic and approach with me before you start writing. The term paper is due April 5, 2011 (last class).

Plagiarism
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

Missed Exams and Late Assignments
You should understand that academic accommodation will not be granted automatically on request. If, due to medical illness, you cannot write a test or exam, or submit an assignment by the due date, it is your responsibility to follow the University’s new “Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness”. This policy can be accessed at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf

Compassionate Grounds
Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member’s physician to your home faculty’s Academic Counselling office. In Case of a Death: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty’s Academic Counselling office.
Course Schedule

1. Introduction January 4, 2011

PART I: Functions of Schooling

2. Socialization, Citizenship, Meritocracy January 11, 2010

3. Preparing for work January 18, 2011


PART II: SCHOOLS AND REPRODUCTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

5. Gender: Constructing Boys and Girls February 1, 2011
6. Sexuality and Harassment February 8, 2011


READING WEEK February 22, 2011

8. Social Class March 1, 2011


9. Intersections March 8, 2011

- DISCUSSION OF BOOKS ASSIGNED FOR REVIEW

PART III: EDUCATION AND REFORM March 15, 2011

10. Safety in schools


11. Educational Crisis, Reform, and Policy  
*March 22, 2011*


12. Alternative Visions  
*March 29, 2011*


13. Review and Wrap-Up  
*April 5, 2011*