Purpose of the Course
This course considers core educational dilemmas in historical and global perspective. What’s the purpose of schools? Is schooling a public good or a private good? Do schools ameliorate or entrench inequality? Who should determine what is taught in schools and how? How do we know if schools are “working”? Over the next four weeks, we will examine each of these questions. We will turn to academic research, journalistic accounts and reports to assist our thinking on these questions. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explore various perspectives on the purposes of education
2. Describe how communities over time and around the world understand education
3. Examine the impact of poverty, race, gender, and socio-economic status on children globally.

Online Course Design
This course is designed with synchronous elements. Each module can be completed on your own schedule. Students will have (1) one written assignment per week, (2) three hours of reading per week, (3) four weekly short-answer quizzes and (4) are expected to participate in online discussion forums.

Required Readings
There are no textbooks required for this course—students will need to access readings and other media through the course website. Readings listed on this syllabus are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

Course Expectations
Students are expected to:

- Be prepared to discuss all assigned materials
- Participate actively in all course activities
- Complete weekly short-answer quizzes
- Participate in online discussions (at least two “rounds” of posts per discussion)
- Complete written requirements (three short essays)
• Complete a final project for the course

**Learning**
If you have particular learning needs, please contact me directly to discuss how we can create an effective learning environment for you. Any students with disabilities will be fully included in this course. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, contact the UW Madison McBurney Disability Resource Center (808-263-2741). Please send me a copy of your confirmation from the McBurney Center no later than the first Friday of our course. Additional information can be found at: [http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu). All information shared with me will be held in the strictest confidence possible.

**Religious Observances**
Students who miss course activities to participate in religious observances will be allowed to make up missed work, provided that they inform me of such obligations by the first Friday of our course.

**Work Schedules**
Most of the work in this course can be completed flexibly around your schedules. If your work schedule may require you to miss a scheduled assignment deadline, please inform me by the first Friday of our course.

**Course Communication**
Please keep communication within Canvas—this helps me track all correspondence about the course and allows me to promptly reply. To send an email through Canvas, click the Inbox icon on the left side of the page. Then, click the "Compose a new message button" and select this course. You can then type my name in the "To" field or use the menu to select "Teachers." If you have trouble sending a message through Canvas, please use your WiscMail account to email me at my email (below).

In addition to these forms of direct communication, we will also use the discussion boards of our course website for responses to questions that might benefit the entire class. The Announcements section will be used for me to post general announcements and links to resources of potential interest that connect with our course topics. The Discussions page also has two open-ended discussion forums for your use:

- Questions about Course Assignments / Course Administration
- Questions about Content / Educational Issues

If you have questions that fall into either category, please post them in the appropriate discussion forum. I make this request because several of you may have similar questions. This way everyone can benefit from your inquiry. I will make every attempt to post responses to these questions within twenty-four hours. If you have a question that falls into one of these categories, but for some reason prefer not to post it publicly, please send me a private email.
Be aware that I may still post the answer to your question on our course website, although I will not identify the source of the question unless you give me permission to do so. Please get in the habit of checking these forums to see if someone else has asked your question, before you ask it. If you send me a private email, I will make every attempt to respond within twenty-four hours.

**Grading**

Grading for this course is based on your participation in discussions and activities as well as your assignments. You must do the reading on time and come to webinars prepared to participate in discussion and activities. Each of the discussions, activities, and assignments will have a rubric detailing its grading scheme. Grades will be determined by the following components:

- Module Discussions (four discussions at five points each) – 20%
- Weekly Writing Assignment (three assignments at ten points each) – 30%
- Final Project (description of plan and final project at twenty points total) – 30%
- Participation (readings / completion of weekly short-answer quizzes) – 20%

Final grades (A-F) will be calculated on the following basis:

- A = 93-100%
- AB = 88-92%
- B = 83-87%
- BC = 78-82%
- C = 70-77%
- D = 60-69%
- F = 0-59%

If you ever have a question or concern about your grading, please contact me directly through Canvas Inbox rather than leaving a post on our discussion boards.

**Academic Integrity, Citations and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is essential for our class to function smoothly, for each of you to get the most out of our work together. According to University of Wisconsin–Madison policy, “Plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others, without giving credit. You should know the principles of plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources. In general, if your paper implies that you are the originator of words or ideas, they must in fact be your own.”

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be
forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to their website.

The Classroom as a Safer Space
Experiences and previously developed knowledge are relevant to this course. The challenge of the course is to develop deeper understanding of your own and others’ experiences and previous knowledge, while also expanding personal views and knowledge bases. To do this, we will focus on critical inquiry and the development of critical consciousness. In other words, you won’t be taught what to think, but you will learn and practice how to be purposefully analytical as you think.

Throughout discussions, people may share personal experiences. Please respect confidentiality by not taking class discussions outside of the class, particularly if it is about the experiences of others.

One of the vital aspects of a socially just physical and intellectual space is the amount of safety it provides for its citizens. Students are required to help create and maintain this type of safety in our classroom by constantly engaging in thoughtful, honest, reflective, and critical dialogue. This can be a difficult task, especially as we purposefully engage in work that involves cultural considerations and interactions, because it is almost always of a very personal nature. To that end, students and the instructor must always honor our different and differing perspectives, support each other’s learning, and be courageous as we engage in positive risk-taking in our education.

I will make every effort to use the name and pronoun you prefer. Please advise me of the pronoun you want me to use in class (e.g., he, she, they, etc.) or if you want to use a gender-neutral pronoun (e.g., they, we, ze/ne/ve).

Assignments
Discussion Assignments
During this course, you will be expected to regularly participate in small group discussion posts. Every student is randomly assigned to “Discussion Squad,” a small discussion group of 4-5 students. For each module, you will have a different discussion role. By Friday June 1, you and your discussion squad-mates sign up for roles for each week. (If you are in a group with 5 members, please have two synthesizers.) will decide roles, and will in a discussion group of 4-5 students. module, you will be assigned one of the following roles:

- **Synthesizer**: The Synthesizer is responsible for summarizing the readings for the module. The Synthesizer should provide a two-paragraph summary of the readings. The first paragraph should provide an introduction for each reading, noting the central argument made by the text. The second paragraph should provide an overview of the general debate made by all of the arguments. That paragraph should address each of the questions: How do these readings relate to one another? What are the questions, dilemmas, or debates? What are the main issues in these
readings? The Synthesizer's post is due by 11:59pm on the first day of the module (Friday).

- **Questioner**: The Questioner’s responsibility is to ask open-ended discussion questions, questions written to provoke analysis and discussion. The Questioner will submit three open-ended questions that draw on the readings. The Questioner's post is due by 11:59pm on the first day of the module (Friday).

- **First Responder**: The First Responder's responsibility is to begin to respond to the questions posed, or the synthesis provided. The First Responder, well, responds first. In at least a paragraph, please weigh in on the questions raised by the readings and materials. The First Responder's responsibility is to begin to respond to the questions posed, or the synthesis provided. The First Responder, well, responds first. In at least a paragraph, please weigh in on the questions raised by the readings and materials. The First Responder's post is due by 11:59pm on the fourth day of the module (Monday).

- **Contributor**: The Contributor's responsibility is to add more depth and dimension to the discussion. Building on the previous questions and commentary, the Contributor adds additional responses, controversies or questions. This response should be at least one paragraph. The Contributor's post is due by 11:59pm on the fourth day of the module (Monday).

On the fifth day of the module (Tuesday), everyone should post another level of contributions—asking further questions, building on the responses of others, or answering questions. The second level of contributions is due by 11:59 pm on the fifth day of the module.

Please review this discussion page before Thursday's web conference. I will be giving some feedback on your work at least once before the conference and will be grading this online discussion after the web conference.

**Weekly Short Answer Quizzes**
Each Thursday, you are expected to complete a five-question short answer quiz about the content from the current module. Quizzes won’t be timed and should be submitted by 11:59am.

**Reflective Essays**
Each Monday, you will be expected to turn in a 1-page reflective essay. This assignment is designed to encourage your thinking on educational dilemmas, and how you observe these issues in your own life and in the greater community. These assignments each Monday that week, but you are more than welcome to submit the essays before that Monday. These essays will ask you to:

1. Essay #1: A personal reflection about your own education (due Monday, June 3).
2. Essay #2: An analysis of an educational issue in the news (due Monday, June 10)
3. Essay #3: An interview with someone who works with educational policy (due Monday, June 17)

The complete assignment description can be found in Canvas.

Final Project
Final assignments are due Sunday, June 23rd. Take an educational topic or controversy discussed in this class; the goal of this assignment is for you to examine this topic from a particular stakeholder’s point of view.

The goal of the final project is to develop an understanding of educational controversies from for you to find your voice by taking a stance on an educational issue. My goal is for you to be able to “try out” the work for a potential career in or around educational policy. For this assignment, you will write at least four pages about an educational issue—the form will be dependent on your determined role and audience. You might, for instance, choose to:

- Write as an academic — creating an article summarizing the research on an educational issue
- Write a policymaker — describing an educational issue and making a case for implementing a certain policy in your district/city/state/country
- Write as an administrator — making a case for changing policies within your school or school district
- Write as an advocate/activist — presenting an argument for why things should change in a specific community
- Write as a community leader — connecting education to other public policies, taking a stance on an educational issue

More information will be discussed during our first webinar in Canvas. By Monday, June 10, please send me a two-paragraph description of an educational policy topic that interests you. Your description should include what you currently know about the subject and what you would like to learn. You will be analyzing this topic in more detail in your final essay.

Course Calendar
Please find the course calendar below with suggested content starts dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE 0</th>
<th>Tuesday, May 28</th>
<th>READ: The course syllabus and other introductory material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday, May 30</td>
<td>POST: “Introduce Yourself” Discussion Due</td>
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<tr>
<th>MODULE 1</th>
<th>Friday, May 31</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuller, B. (2015, July 8). The verdict on charter schools? <em>The Atlantic.</em> [PDF]</td>
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<td>Benson, T. (2016, August 26). About charter schools, the NAACP is simply wrong. <em>National Review.</em> [PDF]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leaders. (2015, August 1). The $1-a-week school. <em>The Economist.</em> [PDF]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATCH:</td>
<td>“The Lottery” and Module 1 Lecture – Education as a public good?</td>
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<tr>
<td>POST:</td>
<td>Synthesizer and Questioner posts due</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUIZ:</td>
<td>(Recommended) Start quiz for Module 1</td>
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| Monday, June 3 | WRITE: Essay #1 Due |
| POST: | First responder and contributors’ posts due |

| Tuesday, June 4 | POST: Complete discussion contributions |

| Thursday, June 6 | QUIZ: Submit Module 1 Quiz |

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<tr>
<th>MODULE 2</th>
<th>Friday, June 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fraser, N. (1995). From redistribution to</td>
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</table>

**WATCH:**
- Module 2 Lecture – Equity and Schooling
- Brown v. Board Review (link on Canvas)
- Race: The Power of An Illusion (EPISODE 3)

**Recommended:**
- LISTEN: This American Life, Episode 562 – The Problem We All Live With

**POST:** Synthesizer and Questioner posts due

**QUIZ:** (Recommended) Start quiz for Module 2

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, June 10</td>
<td>WRITE: Essay #2 Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POST: First responder and contributors’ posts due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 11</td>
<td>POST: Complete discussion contributions</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 13</td>
<td>QUIZ: Submit Module 2 Quiz</td>
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**MODULE 3**

**Friday, June 14**

**READ:**
- Common Core Standards
  - English Language Arts / Literacy Standards;
  - Mathematics Standards
- "No Child Left Behind" legislation
  - Questions and Answers on No Child Left Behind – Accountability;
  - Introduction: No Child Left Behind
Comparative Perspectives, 12(2).


Recommended:

- **Plank, D. (2017).** Implementing the BNCC: Lessons from "Common Core." Lemann Center at Stanford University.
- **Bowater, D. (2015).** (Links to an external site.). Spotlights on ENEM exam in Brazil after questions row. Times Higher Ed.

WATCH:

- **Bringing Standards to Brazil**
- **Module 3 Lecture - Standards, Curriculum & Assessment**

POST: Synthesizer and Questioner posts due (extensions allowed till Sunday, June 16th)

QUIZ: (Recommended) Start quiz for Module 3

WRITE: Thoughts for final project due

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Monday, June 17</th>
<th>WRITE: Essay #3 Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>POST: First responder and contributors’ posts due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 18</td>
<td>POST: Complete discussion contributions</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 20</td>
<td>QUIZ: Submit Quiz #3</td>
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**Final due June 23**
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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<td><strong>Module 0 discussion due</strong></td>
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<td>Essay #1 Due</td>
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<td>Module 1 discussion due</td>
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<td>Module 1 Quiz due</td>
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<td>FR and C Post</td>
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<td>Essay #2 Due</td>
<td>Essay #2 Due</td>
<td>Module 2 discussion due</td>
<td>Module 2 Quiz due</td>
<td>Module 2 Quiz due</td>
<td>Final project ideas due; Start of Module 3 S &amp; Q Post</td>
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<td>Essay #3 Due</td>
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<td><strong>Final project due</strong></td>
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<td>Final grades posted</td>
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**Bold** = Assignment due  
S = Synthesizer post due  
Q = Questioner post due  
FR= First responder post due  
C = Contributor post due