MTLA 601: Race, Class, and Gender in Education
Fall 2014
Thursday 5:00 – 7:45 PM
3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours:
T,TH: 11:00-12:00
TH: 4:00-5:00
By appointment as needed

Course Description:
This course examines the contemporary significance of race/ethnicity, class and gender
on the educational experience of men and women in the US. Drawing on history, literature, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and public policy, it considers the ways public educational institutions empower individuals and at the same time reproduce social inequalities. As examples, we will examine issues surrounding single gender education, early childhood rearing practices, culturally relevant teaching, and feminist and critical pedagogies. This course requires candidates to critically examine their own educational experiences in relationship to privilege associated with class, race and gender. Throughout the course we will endeavor to answer the question: What are the possibilities and avenues for change?

Course Text/Materials:


Articles as assigned in course outline available on OAKS.
Course Objectives: Candidates will:

- Understand how race/ethnicity, class, and gender are components of an individual's identity
- Understand how class, race/ethnicity, and gender are social constructs and how they shape opportunity, privileging some and hindering others.
- Explain how teachers’ race/ethnicity, class and gender influence the decisions they make about children, instruction, and the classroom environment.
- Identify salient issues of race/ethnicity, gender, and class in the contemporary preK-12 public school and societal context.
- Develop interviewing skills (question development, critical listening, data analysis)

Course Outcomes

All teacher education programs in the School of Education are guided by a commitment to Making the Teaching and Learning Connection. Teachers who make the teaching and learning connection: 1. Understand and value the learner; 2. Know what and how to teach and assess and how to create an environment in which learning occurs, and 3. Understand themselves as professionals. These three elements of teacher competency are at the heart of the EHHP conceptual framework and guide what you will learn and how your learning will be assessed. Each course in the teacher education programs provides opportunities for you to develop and extend your knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to become an effective teacher.

- ETC 1-Outcomes related to understanding and valuing the learner: Through this course you will develop a better understanding of race/ethnicity, class, and gender as critical components of students’ identity and how students’ identity develops through social interactions with peers and teachers within the school context.
- ETC 2-Outcomes related to knowing what and how to teach and assess and how to create an environment in which learning occurs: Through this course you will uncover how your actions (what and how you teach, how you interact with students, behavioral expectations, etc.) are critical to reversing inequities based on race/ethnicity, class, and gender.
- ETC 3-Outcomes related to understanding self as a professional: Through this course you will gain a deeper understanding of yourself as well as how race/ethnicity, class, and gender in the broader society and how cultural, social, economic, and historical forces impact you as a professional and expectations of what teachers can and cannot accomplish related to overcoming inequity.

Course Requirements:

Demonstration of SOE Dispositions and how students express them in this course:
- Belief that all students can learn (attitudes expressed about students and learning)
- Value and respect for individual differences (participation in class discussions)
- Value of positive human interactions (participation in class discussions)
- Exhibition and encouragement of intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm about learning, and willingness to learn new ideas (participation in class discussions; completion
- Dedication to inquiry, reflection, and self-assessment (quality of course assignments; active participation in class discussions; support and encouragement of diverse ideas)
- Value of collaborative and cooperative work (participation in class activities)
- Sensitivity toward community and cultural contexts (insights expressed in class discussions and reflected in course assignments)
- Engagement in responsible and ethical practice (performance on course assignments and contribution to class activities)
- Development of professional mastery over time (performance over time on all assignments)

Students are responsible for:
- Completing all assigned readings and projects on time. Late assignments are accepted only at the instructor’s discretion. Points will be subtracted from late assignments.
- Attending to all course content (lecture, text, outside reading, handouts, research)
- Retrieving all missed assignments/notes from someone in class, not the instructor
- Utilizing internet, word processing, email and OAKS. Please consult with instructor to arrange tutoring if you are unfamiliar with any of these applications.
- Attending regularly and on time and actively participating in class (YOU CAN MISS NO MORE THAN TWO CLASS SESSIONS)

The professor is responsible for:
- Being prepared and actively engaged in all classes
- Being accessible to students outside of class
- Facilitating safe and stimulating classroom discussions
- Providing timely and constructive feedback on student work

Description of Projects/Assignments:
Students are expected to complete all assignments to receiving passing grade in this course.

1. **Autobiography**

You will compete a four-part autobiography as a baseline reflection on how race/ethnicity, class, and gender combine to shape the person you are. The autobiography is roughly based on Ezekiel’s article “I Grew Up White.”

*Part 1. Overview.* Provide a general description of your upbringing. Where did you grow up? What values were instilled and by whom? How would you describe your community, neighborhood, and school communities? How has your community changed over the years? How have your overall beliefs, values, and expectations changed and what were major contributors to change and stability in your life.

*Part 2. Race/ethnicity.* Describe how you would characterize yourself in terms of race/ethnicity. What were your earliest understandings and conceptions of
race/ethnicity? Did you personally experience racism or know people who did? What were attitudes toward people of other races within your family and community? Did you go to school with people of other races/ethnicities and to what extent did people interact across racial/ethnic lines?

**Part 3. Class.** Describe your social class as you were growing up. Class is usually determined by a combination of income, educational attainment, and social standing in the community. When did you first recognize social class differences and your family’s position along the class continuum? How were people of different classes treated in your community and school? What attitudes did members of your family display about people of different classes? Did your social class change while you were growing up?

**Part 4. Gender.** Describe how you would characterize yourself in relation to gender (include both gender identification and sexual orientation if you wish). When were you first aware of your gender and did you ever wish your gender were different? Have you experienced gender discrimination or sexual harassment at work or in school? Do you know anyone who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered and what kinds of issues have they dealt with? How have your views on gender and sexuality changed over time?

*Points: 100 points  
Length: 4-6 pages  
Due: Aug 28th*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading criteria: Autobiography</th>
<th>Pts. possible</th>
<th>Pts. earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thorough presentation of information in all four sections</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vivid description of childhood influences</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thoughtful presentation of factors leading to changes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of writing (grammar and organization)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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**2. Comparative educational experiences (3)**

These three papers will provide you and opportunity to compare yourself with people who differ from you in terms of race/ethnicity, class, and gender. For each paper select someone who differs from you. Develop a set of interview questions (we will work together on ideas for these questions), record the person’s comments, and analyze their statements and experience in relation to your own. You should also tie in course readings in developing the interview questions and in your discussion. We will spend time in class on interviewing protocol.

*Points: Each 100 points*
Length: Each 4-5 pages
Due: #1–9/25, #2–10/23, #3–11/13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading criteria: Comparative educational experiences</th>
<th>Pts. possible</th>
<th>Pts. earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness and sensitivity of interview questions and resulting data</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depth and thoughtfulness of analysis of data and comparison to self</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thoroughness of link to readings</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of writing (organization and grammar)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Total</td>
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3. Examination of school or classroom climate and culture
An objective of this course is to understand how society in general and educators in particular perpetuate racial/ethnic, class, and gender inequities in schools and classrooms. In most cases this is done unintentionally, but the effects are still felt by students. This assignment provides an opportunity to examine how racial/ethnic, class, and/or gender inequities are perpetuated or addressed in schools or classrooms. For those of you who are not currently teaching, you can do one of the following:

- Partner with a classmate who is working in a school (you each will write separate papers)
- Use the College of Charleston as a research site
- Return to a school you attended
- Gain permission from a friend or relative who teaches
- Talk to me about other ideas

If you choose to examine your own classroom, consider the following questions along with others you develop:

- In what situations might I favor students most like myself?
- How does the curriculum I use in my classroom privilege some children over others?
- How do my favored instructional strategies possibly favor some students over others?
- For what reasons might some parents feel unwelcome in my classroom?
- Do I embrace or avoid discussions of race/ethnicity, class, and gender and how does my comfort level with these issues affect my students?
- To what extent do students interact with each other across racial/ethnic, class, and gender lines?
If you choose to examine a school, consider the following questions:

- In what situations are some students favored over others at this school?
- How does the district’s curriculum privilege some children over others?
- How does the school structure and organization possibly favor some students over others?
- For what reasons might some parents feel unwelcome in the school?
- Do members of the school community embrace or avoid discussions of race/ethnicity, class, and gender and how does the overall comfort level with these issues affect students?
- To what extent do students interact with each other across racial/ethnic, class, and gender lines?

As you observe the school or classroom, consider what you have learned in course readings and discussions and make explicit links to readings and discussions in your write up of findings.

*Points: 100 points

*Length: 4-6 pages

*Due: November 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading criteria: School or classroom culture/climate</th>
<th>Pts. possible</th>
<th>Pts. earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vivid description of how race/ethnicity, class, and gender manifest in the school or classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depth of reflection on how actions of adults, including yourself, impact students</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence that observations and reflections are guided by course readings and discussions</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of writing (organization and grammar)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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**1. Final Project: Literature Review and Presentation**

We are going to decide the parameters of this assignment together.

*Points: 200

*Length: 10-15 and 10 min presentation

*Due: Exam Day*

**5. Class Participation and Attendance**
Attendance will be taken at every class meeting via a sign-in sheet. Students are responsible to sign in. One absence will be granted, either excused or unexcused. After one absence, the student’s final grade will drop by 10 points. After two absences, the student will be dropped. If you know you are going to be absent, please notify the instructor. Tardy is more than five minutes late. Two equals an absence.

All personal communication devices are not to be out during class time. You are not allowed to engage in any form of personal communication during class time. This includes, but is not limited to, phone calls, texting, Tweeting, Facebook, MySpace and/or Internet browsing. IF YOU ENGAGE IN ANY FORM OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DURING CLASS YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE CLASS AND YOU WILL BE MARKED ABSENT. If you have an emergency call/text you MUST take you can leave your phone on vibrate and leave the classroom to take the call and/or respond to the text.

Positive, thoughtful and productive class participation is essential to this class. Students will be graded by the instructor based on their class participation and how well their behavior reflects the SOE dispositions. Any negative behavior will result in point loss. This behavior includes but is not limited to talking out of turn, excessive ‘paper shuffling’, violating the cell phone/smartphone/texting/internet policy and general disrespect to classmates, the professor and/or visitors.

Points: 300

Due: Daily

Summary of Assignment Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autobiography</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative experience: Race/ethnicity</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative experience: Class</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative experience: Gender</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination of school or classroom climate/culture</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project: Literature Review and Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1000</td>
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Deadlines/ Late Work:
Late work will not be accepted. If work is not handed in by the stated deadline the student will not receive credit for the assignment. Failure to print out and/or attach an assignment is not a valid excuse. If you know you will be unable to complete an assignment on time contact the instructor BEFORE the deadline to discuss the situation. Extensions will only be granted in EXTREME circumstances.

**Evaluation Scale:**
Grades are figured in the School of EHHP as follows:

- A = 100 – 93
- B+ = 92 – 89
- B = 88 – 85
- C+ = 84 - 81
- C = 80 – 77
- F = 76 – 0

**Accommodations**
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all qualified students enrolled in this course are entitled to “reasonable accommodations.” Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course.

**Tentative Course Calendar:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 8/21</td>
<td>Introductions, syllabus review, identity, Race and the Media..</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2. 8/28 | Racial categories: Same genes, different lives | Read: Section A of Pollock  
Read: Ezikiel (OAKS) |
| 3. 9/4 | Opportunities provided and denied in schools | Read: Section B of Pollock  
**Autobiography due** |
| 4. 9/11 | Curriculum and race/ethnicity | Read: Section C of Pollock  
Show: *Off Track* |
| 5. 9/18 | Asking about and acting against racism | Read: Selections from Sections D-F of Pollock  
**Complete IRB training** |
| 6. 9/25 | Educating immigrant students | Read: Monzó and Rueda (OAKS)  
Read: Fine et.al. (OAKS)  
Read: Wells (OAKS)  
**Comparative experience: Race/ethnicity due** |

**CLASS**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. 10/9</td>
<td>Class and the achievement gap</td>
<td>Read: Rothstein -- all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 10/16</td>
<td>Class and childhood</td>
<td>Lareau: 1-104, Appendix B</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.10/23</td>
<td>Class, language and institutions</td>
<td>Lareau: 105 – 257 <strong>Comparative experience: Class due</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
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<td>11. 10/30</td>
<td>Do gender inequities really exist?</td>
<td>Read: Ginsberg, Shapiro, &amp; Brown – all</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. 11/6</td>
<td>Issues for gay, lesbian, bi, transgendered</td>
<td>Read: GLSEN (OAKS) <strong>Examination of school or classroom culture due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. 11/13</td>
<td>Is single gender a solution?</td>
<td>Read: Lee, Marks, &amp; Byrd (OAKS) <strong>Comparative Experience 3: Gender due</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SYNTHESIS &amp; PERFORMANCES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. 11/20</td>
<td>Literature Review Rough Draft-Individual Paper Conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td><strong>No Class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam Day</td>
<td><strong>Literature Review and Presentation due</strong></td>
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**Readings on OAKS**


**Supplemental Reading**

**General**


**Race/Ethnicity**


*Class*


*Gender*


