Instructor and Contact Information

Jon N. Hale, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
86 Wentworth St., Room 235
halejn@cofc.edu; @jnhale2
(843) 953–6354 (office)

Office Hours:
T, TH: 3:00-5:00
W: 1:00-4:00, and by appointment

Course Description

This course traces the historical, philosophical and sociological underpinnings of contemporary educational policies in American public education. The history of educational policy since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 will be thoroughly examined through intensive reading. In this interdisciplinary approach, one can take a more measured approach to understanding contemporary phenomena such as graduation rates that are lower than the nation’s average, the proliferation of charter schools in cities and the increasing emphasis on student test scores as a component of teachers’ performance evaluations. This course will examine schooling in the local Charleston context as well as in a number of American cities including Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans and others cities that present contemporary challenges related to school reform. This course also examines current issues focusing on those that challenge today’s students, teachers, and the teaching profession including but not limited to the Achievement Gap, Title I, re-segregation, merit pay, and school choice.

Course Text/Materials


*Additional readings available on OAKS.
Course Objectives:

• Develop a critical understanding of the underlying philosophical, historical, and cultural underpinnings of contemporary educational issues and policies (e.g., privatization, school choice, and affirmative action)
• Understand how policies are developed, disseminated, and implemented and the influences on this process
• Be able to place issues and policies in state, national, and international context
• Be able to see multiple sides to policy issues and implementation
• Be able to distinguish between objectivity and subjectivity in relation to educational issues and policies and place policy development in a larger social, political, economic and historic context
• Be able to analyze and synthesize professional literature and produce a coherent literature review, clearly identifying and substantiating a compelling problem.

Course Expectations (aligned with EHHP standards)

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 of reading assignments; quality of course projects)
• 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 ONE CLASS SESSION)
• Assuring that all work is their own and that sources are properly cited and credited (see http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml for examples of acceptable and unacceptable use of sources.

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
Assignments and Evaluation Criteria:

**Book Review**
Professional graduate students should demonstrate an ability to not only summarize the main points of an academic text but to evaluate its contribution and place its contribution (or lack thereof) in a larger historiography or field of study. For this assignment students will review Michael Fabricant and Michelle Fine’s, *Charter Schools and the Corporate Makeover of Public Education*. The review should be between 1200 and 1500 words and include a substantive summary of the main points of the book, your evaluation of the book, and a discussion of how this book makes a contribution to the field of educational policy studies. **Due October 11 (50 pts)**

**Theoretical Analysis of Education Policy**
This paper is intended to help you demonstrate your understanding of the concepts behind and application of theoretical approaches to studying education policy. Students are expected analyze the Every Student Succeeds Act (2016) using two theoretical approaches to policy discussed in the course, including (but not limited to): (1) functionalism and institutionalism (2) structuralism and post-structuralism (3) critical and critical race theory and (4) rational choice/exchange theory. Students should then apply these frameworks to ESSA.

In your paper, you should discuss how both of the frameworks you select examine, analyze, and respond to ESSA. For both perspectives that students choose, papers should address three areas: (1) How does the theoretical approach define and examine the policy’s assumptions? How does the frameworks discuss the reasons for and rational behind this initiative? (2) What outcomes (and what kinds of outcomes) does the approach look for, predict or generally address? (3) What critical or essential questions does the perspective seek to illuminate or predict? What consistencies or inconsistencies does the theoretical approach highlight in the policy?

Papers should be 6-8 double-spaced pages in length using 12 point font and 1” margins. **November 1 (100 pts)**

**Policy Analysis Paper**
Choose a specific educational initiative happening in a specific urban district.

Select a policy of your interest that we have covered in class and/or that relates to your professional interests but is grounded in a specific local or state level policy initiative, either at the grassroots (“bottom up”) or bureaucratic/institutional (“top down”) level. **Your policy must be approved by the instructor.** Policies include but are not limited to “Disturbing School” laws in South Carolina, the movement to return to an elected school board in Chicago, education policy initiatives in the Dream Act, parents’ and students’ organization to contest urban districts’ use of standardized testing, the role of teacher evaluation in teacher union contracts in any number of cities, including Baltimore, Boston and Chicago, or the proliferation of charter schools in Detroit and/or New Orleans, where more than half of the cities’ students attend charter schools. You can also examine specific charter school networks such as Meeting Street Academy, Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), Noble Network, Achievement First, Alternative certification as a policy, examining Teach for America or the New Teacher Project, or community-school models such as the Harlem Children’s zone or the Federal Government’s Promise Neighborhood. This needs to be a specific local or state level policy initiative.

Please write a 5-7 page paper (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 point font) in which you analyze your chosen initiative/policy from each the following perspectives:

- The initiative’s/policy’s origins drawing upon at least one theoretical framework (How did it come to be? Who brought it to the city/district? Was its initiation wanted, contested, both?)
• Historical, political and/or economic context of policy’s origins (including the professional discourse, ideology and relevant demographic trends in the city or state, such as shifts relative to class, race, ethnicity, language or immigrant status)

• Given the initiative’s/policy’s origins and context, identify and evaluate anticipated and unintended outcomes. Will the policy be able to unfold as intended?

• Drawing upon a theoretical framework, provide a critical analysis in terms of potential resources and obstacles that you can identify in the process of policy development and implementation?

Your responses will need to be informed both by class readings and by the research you conduct on your chosen topic from academic and other reliable sources. Due: November 22 (100 pts) Paper will be 10-12 pages for students who have completed the Literature Review.

Policy Memo
Assume you are a policy advisor/analyst to Governor Haley, Superintendent Zais, Dr. Postlewait (or your district’s superintendent) or the school board. Identify a problem and what you think is a major cause of the problem and suggest a potential policy solution. Write a short (no more than three pages) memo that:

• Describes the problem and cause
• Presents evidence (distinguishing between research and opinion) supporting the importance of the problem and the cause you have identified
• Outlines one potential solution
• Details the steps and resources necessary to implement the solution
• Identifies potential roadblocks and supports to implementation

Points: 150
Length: 5-7 pages double-spaced
Due: December 5 (for students not completing the Literature Review or the Capstone Proposal)

Literature Review
The major assignment of this course will be a literature review in which you thoroughly survey and evaluate salient literature published around a topic of interest related to your professional interests. You should select a topic that interests you for your capstone project so that the literature review can be used to support your research proposal and presentation of findings. The literature review should:

• Make a clear problem statement and provide a convincing thesis explaining the problem
• Present alternative conceptions of the problem
• Clearly present literature from multiple perspectives
• Critique the current literature on the problem
• Identify areas needing additional research

Points: 150
Length: 12-15 pages
Due: December 5

Please Note: If you have already completed a literature review, you will be expected to complete a research proposal to be used in your capstone course. Completing this project requires personal approval of the
Professor.

Presentation
You will give a ten-minute presentation of your key findings of the literature review or the capstone project and next steps. The presentation must be done through either a video or Prezi format.
**Points:** 50
**Length:** 10 minutes
**Due:** November 25

Participation and Attendance
This course will function as a seminar in which active participation of everyone is REQUIRED. By active participation I mean regular, on-time attendance, completion of all reading and homework assignments prior to the beginning of class, thoughtful participation in discussion, allowance of time for others to speak, and attentive, respectful reception of classmates' opinions and ideas, and avoidance of diversions such as social media use and texting during class. All writing assignments must be submitted by the deadlines. No late work is accepted. If an emergency occurs, please consult the professor to make arrangements. Students with more than one unexcused absence will fail the course.

**Course Assignment**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
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<td>Theoretical Approaches Paper</td>
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<td>Policy Analysis</td>
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<td>Literature Review</td>
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<td>Presentation (Literature Review)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Evaluation Scale**
- A = 100 – 93
- B+ = 92-88
- B = 87-83
- C+ = 82-78
- C = 77-74
- F = 73 and below

**Course Calendar:**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. August 23</td>
<td>• Introductions</td>
<td>• Mills, “The Sociological Imagination” (OAKS)</td>
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<td>• Course Overview</td>
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<td>• The U.S. Constitution and the Tenth Amendment</td>
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<td><strong>Part I</strong> Foundations of Policy in American Education</td>
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<td>2. August 30</td>
<td>• Nature of School Reform</td>
<td>• Tyack, <em>Tinkering Toward Utopia</em>, prologue, chapters 1-3</td>
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<td>• Local v. Federal forms of control</td>
<td>• Heck, “Chpt. 1, Intro to Policy Making and its Study” and “Chpt. 3, Studying Policy Development,” in <em>Studying Education and Social Policy</em> (OAKS)</td>
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<td>• Religion and Education</td>
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<td>• Education and the Colonial Era</td>
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<td>• Early Federal Intervention</td>
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<td>• Education and the Early Republic</td>
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### 3. September 6
- Functionalism
- Unintended Consequences
- Institutional Theory
- The “Common School” Movement
- Morrill Land-Grant Acts
- Segregated Educational Policy
- The Progressive Era
- Immigration and Education

- Kivisto, “Max Weber”, 76-94; 102-107 (OAKS)
- Kivisto, “The Unanticipated Consequences of Social Action,” “the Functional Prerequisites of Social Systems,” “Functional Differentiation,” 186-205 (OAKS)
- Meyer et. al “Bureaucratization without Centralization” and Chubb and Moe, “An Institutional Perspective”, 450-462; 474-487 (OAKS)
- Tyack, *Tinkering Toward Utopia*, chapters 4-5, epilogue

### 4. September 13
- Critical Theory
- Critical Race Theory
- National Defense Education Act (1958)
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965)

- Derrick Bell, *Racial Covenants*, 1-86. (OAKS)
- David Gillborn, “Racism as Policy” *Educational Forum*, 26-41 (OAKS)

### 5. September 20
- Desegregation and Busing
- Convergence Theory
- New Right and the Republican Party
- A Nation at Risk

- Delmont, *Why Busing Failed*
- Gardner, et al “A Nation at Risk” (OAKS)

### 6. September 27
- Origins of the Standards Movement
- No Child Left Behind (2001)
- Every Student Succeeds Act (2016)

- Vinovskis, *From A Nation at Risk to NCLB*, chapters 6-7 (OAKS)
- Darling-Hammond, “Evaluating NCLB”
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Part II</th>
<th>Contemporary Issues and Policy Considerations</th>
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| 7. October 4 | • School Choice  
• Exchange Theory  
• Rational Choice Theory  
• Charter Schools  
• Magnet Schools  
| • McGuinn, *No Child Left Behind*, 1-74 (OAKS)  
• Kivisto, “Social Behavior as Exchange,”  
“Power-Dependence Relations,” “Human Capital and Social Capital,” “The Emergence of Cooperative Social Institutions”, 294-332 (OAKS)  
• Loeb and McEwan, “An Economic Approach to Education Policy Implementation” (OAKS)  
• Smylie and Evans, “Social Capital and the Problem of Implementation” (OAKS)  
• Orfield and Frankenberg, *Educational Delusions?*, chpts 1-2; chpt. 6; chpt 8  
| 8. October 11 | • Obama and Educational Policy Corporatization and Privatization  
• Neoliberal Educational Reform  
• Standardized Tests  
• Ravitch, *Reign of Error*, 1-62; 133-226  
• **Book Review Due**  
| 9. October 18 | • Post-Structuralism  
• *Habitus*  
• Achievement gap  
• Tracking  
| • Kivisto, “Structures and the Habitus” and “Panopticism”, 435-442; 449-455 (OAKS)  
• Althuser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 1476-1509 in Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism  
• Ansolone “Tracking” (OAKS)  
• Smith and Harper, “Disproportionate Impact of K-12 School Suspension…” (OAKS)  
• Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, Introduction, Chpt. 1 & Chpt. 5 (OAKS)  
| 10. October 25 | • Resegregation  
• Class and Poverty  
• Affirmative Action  
• Title I  
| • Orfield, “E Pluribus…” (OAKS); 1-40  
• Rothstein, *Class and Schools*, chapters 1&5 (OAKS)  
• Ladd, “Education and Poverty” (OAKS)  
• Elliott, “The evolution of an issue” (OAKS)  
• Cohen & Moffitt, “The Transformation of Title I?” (OAKS)  
| 11. November 1 | • Local and State Policy Advocacy  
| • Guest Speakers – Local Advocacy  
• **Theoretical Analysis Paper Due**  
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>November 15</td>
<td>Critiquing and Evaluating Policy</td>
<td>• International Comparisons</td>
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<td>• Teacher Quality</td>
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<td>• Accountability</td>
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<td>• Rotberg, “International Test Scores,” (OAKS)</td>
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<td>• Koretz, “How Do American Students Measure Up?” (OAKS)</td>
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<td>• Ripley, “Your Child Left Behind,” (OAKS)</td>
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<td>• Hancock</td>
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<td>• Hancock, “Why are Finland’s Schools Successful?” (OAKS)</td>
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<td>November 22</td>
<td>Critiquing and Evaluating Policy</td>
<td>• Contemporary Issues and Neoliberal Policy</td>
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<td>• Teacher Unions</td>
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<td>• Teacher Activism</td>
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<td>• Ravitch, <em>Reign of Error</em>, 63-132, 227-330</td>
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<td>• Rodriguez, S. (2015). “We Need to Grab Power Where We Can”:</td>
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<td>*Teacher Activists’ Responses to Neoliberal Policies during the Chicago</td>
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<td>Teacher’s Strike of 2012-2013,” (Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor</td>
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<td>• Policy Analysis Due</td>
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<td>November 29</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>• Class presentations due</td>
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<td>• Literature Review Dec. 6</td>
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**Course Bibliography and Recommended Reading**


Hancock, L. (2011) “Why Are Finland’s Schools Successful?” *Smithsonian* magazine.


