

Sociocultural Influences on Learning – Spring 2019
University of Texas at Austin – Department of Curriculum and Instruction
TR 2:00-3:30, Jester A215A

Instructor: Julia Echternach

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Office Hours Site: PCL Plaza or Lobby

Office Hours: MW 10-11, T 3:30 – 4:30, & by appt.

Additional Instructors (Approximately 2 weeks during April / May)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course, we explore how schools influence and are influenced by systems of race, gender, sexuality, class, and colonialism, and we imagine what it means to teach for social justice. We will review the histories of African Americans', Native Americans', Mexican Americans', and Asian Americans' experiences in schools; consider the complex ways that race, gender, capitalism, and colonialism intersect and influence our lives and our society; and explore how teachers can engage students in transforming their communities through education. Although we focus on schooling and the role of teachers, the course is relevant for anyone who works or will work in service to youth and communities.

The course entails a substantial amount of reading and discussion about intellectually complex and emotionally charged topics. We will also continually reflect on how we are positioned in the world, what mindsets we hold, and how we want to take action in our communities. Students should be prepared to engage deeply with the course material and in-class activities.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*
- Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling*
- Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers*
- Course Reader from Jenn's Copies

ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments should be submitted on Canvas.

- Participation (15%)
- Service Learning (15%)
- Mini-Projects (15%)
- Reflective Essays (40%)
- Educational Autobiography (15%)

Participation (15%): The participation grade will be based upon: 1) Coming to class prepared to discuss the readings – i. e. you have completed the readings and have highlighted/underlined, taken notes, and/or written down your questions and reflections; 2) Listening attentively during discussions and lectures, and setting aside cell phones, assignments for other classes, social media, etc.; 3) Contributing to class discussions on a regular basis; 4) Participating equitably in group activities – i. e. you ensure that everyone's voice is heard, and make sure that no one dominates the group. You will self-score and will receive a participation score from the instructor at 3 points throughout the semester.

Service Learning (15%): In order to engage in a cycle of reflection and action, you are required to complete at least 15 hours of service learning, plus 2 hours of mini-projects, during the course of the semester. It is your responsibility to arrange and attend these service hours with an approved organization from the list provided in class, or to secure instructor approval to begin or continue service learning with an organization that is not on the list. You must track your service learning hours each time that you attend and receive a signature from the supervising staff member. Service learning is a mandatory component of the course and you will not be permitted to pass the course without completing the required hours.

Service Learning Mini-Projects (15%): The service learning mini-projects provide an opportunity to put the course readings into action and to practice culturally relevant public service. You will be doing some on-site work for each mini-project and will count each as **one hour** of service. For each project, you will turn in a 3- to 4-page, double-spaced 12 pt. Times New Roman paper responding to the assignment prompt.

- *Mini-Project 1: Interview.* For this assignment, you will arrange a minimum 20-minute interview with a parent or community leader/elder to learn about 1) their family history or community history and 2) their values in regards to education and schooling. Your purpose is to identify this family or community member's individual and/or community cultural wealth and funds of knowledge. You will prepare an explanation of the assignment and a list of questions, to be reviewed by the instructor in advance of the interview. Please select a parent or community member who is comfortable speaking with you (even if through an interpreter) and who is comfortable with you recording or taking notes in order to complete your class assignment. Plan to share a copy of your notes and your written paper with the person you interview. In your paper, you will describe the person you interviewed, what you learned from them, and how this knowledge could inform your service work in the community.
- *Mini-Project 2: Community Walk.* For this assignment, you will go on a minimum 30-minute walk through the neighborhood surrounding your service learning site and take photos of at least 5 community assets, forms of cultural wealth, and/or funds of knowledge. In your paper, you will explain what these 5 assets tell you about the community, and you will reflect on your experience of walking through the neighborhood. For example, you may find that you initially focus on the community deficits, in which case you can use the paper to engage in a process of positive re-framing.

Reflective Essays (4 essays, 10% each): At four points during the semester, you will write a 3- to 4-page reflective essay about a thematic concept that is central to the course and to the broader teacher education program. In each prompt, you will be asked to cite examples from 3 recent readings of your choosing and to fully explain your personal response to the essay prompt and readings.

Educational Autobiography (15%): In this 4- to 6-page paper, in conversation with the course readings and course themes, you will write about the sociocultural influences on your K-12 schooling experiences, paying specific attention to the way that race, class, and gender affected your education, the way that your schooling experiences shape your beliefs and expectations today, and the ways that you plan to enact transformative change in the world from your own situated position. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and a rubric will be available on Canvas.

A Note on Writing Assignments

- I am a writing instructor, a student of linguistics, and an avid reader of literature. I can support you in writing in an academic voice, and I also welcome and encourage writing in non-academic voices. I will not approach your paper like the essay portion of an SAT exam, but will evaluate it as a piece of **meaningful communication**. You don't need to ask yourself, "Does this sound 'academic?'" but rather, "Does my writing communicate something meaningful?"
- *Language*: Writing assignments may be completed any dialect of English, Spanish, or Spanglish. Additional languages are permitted if you provide a translation or if the meaning is evident from context.
- *Clarity and Organization*: No matter what language you use, your ideas must be clear and comprehensible, specific, and presented in an organized way that a reader can follow (e. g. using paragraphs or stanzas).
- *Format*: Please turn in assignments in 12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. This ensures that everyone is meeting the same length requirements.
- *Evidence of Revision*: Please proofread your writing assignments, multiple times if needed, to ensure that your ideas are presented clearly and to clean up careless typos.
- *Thoughtful Inclusion of Quotations*: When necessary, you should cite other people's most important words when they have communicated their idea very well. Otherwise, you should summarize their ideas in your own words. In a paper that responds to other people's writing, you should include 1 – 2 quotes per paragraph or 3 – 5 per page. Please include a "Works Cited" section at the end of your paper with any form of citation.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: After **two absences** for any reason, you will lose 3 points from your final grade for each additional absence. If you miss more than four classes, you will receive a failing grade in the course. Please communicate with the instructor as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

You will not be penalized for missing class on religious holy days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor, in writing, at least one week before the absence, so that alternative arrangements can be made to complete work. If you know you will have to miss class(es) for this reason, provide your instructor with the date(s) as early as possible. Please note that the University specifies very few other excused absences (e.g., jury duty).

The instructor is not responsible for updating you on the material that was covered during class if you were not present. You are responsible for learning about notes and assignments from a classmate or from the course website.

Late Assignments: Grades for all writing assignments will be reduced by 10% for each day they are late. Students may request an extension by e-mailing the instructor at least 36 hours (1.5 days) before the deadline and explaining why the extension is needed. The instructor will approve or reject this request, and specify a later due date if relevant.

Scholastic Honesty

Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to *all* drafts and assignments,

and a report of the incident will be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students and filed in your permanent UT record. Under certain circumstances, the Dean of Students will initiate proceedings to expel you from the University.

So, take care to read and understand the [Statement on Scholastic Responsibility](#), which can be found online at <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/rhetoric/firstyearwriting/plagiarismcollusion.php> If you have any doubts about your use of sources, ask your instructor for help *before* handing in the assignment.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. More information is available on the [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) website at <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/>

E-mail Accounts

Email is an official means of communication at UT-Austin, and your instructor will use this medium to communicate class information. You are therefore required to obtain a UT email account and to check it daily. All students may claim an email address at no cost by going to the [IT Services](#) website at <https://get.utmail.utexas.edu/>.

Emergency Information

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.

In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found on the [UT emergency page](#) at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>

Other important Emergency Information

You can find more information about planning for emergencies on the [Emergency Preparedness site](#) at <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/preparedness/>

Behavior Concerns Advice Line: 512-232-5050

Use this resource to help fellow UT members about whom you have concerns. You can learn more about the [Behavior Concerns Advice Line](#) on their site at <https://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/bcal.php>

Student Emergency Services: 512-471-5017 Mon.-Fri., 8-4:30 (Call BCAL outside these hours)
<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Nurse Advice Line: 512-475-6877 All day every day

Counseling and Mental Health Center: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Gender and Sexuality Center: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/>

Multicultural Engagement Center: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/multiculturalengagement/>

Identity Based Support and Discussion Groups:

Latinx Voices, Tuesdays 2-3:30, GWB 1.130

Black Voices, Tuesdays 3-4:30, GWB 3.200A

Asian American Voices, Wednesdays 5-6:30, PAI 5.33

Queer Voices, Wednesdays 12-1:30, SAC 2.112

Finding Our Voices: A Women of Color Discussion Group, Mondays noon-1:30, SAC 2.112

International Student Discussion Group, Fridays 2-3:15, SSB G1.106

SCHEDULE

January 22

- Introductions
- Overview of course requirements

January 24

- Delgado, R. (1989). Storytelling for oppositionists and others: A plea for narrative. *Michigan Law Review*, 87(8), 2411-2441.

January 29

- Weiner, L. (2006). Challenging deficit thinking. *Educational Leadership*, 64(1), 42-45.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into practice*, 31(2), 132-141.

January 31

- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race ethnicity and education*, 8(1), 69-91.

February 5

- Whitehead, C. (2016). *The Underground Railroad*. New York: Doubleday. **Read pages 1-96**

February 7

- Whitehead, C. (2016). *The Underground Railroad*. New York: Doubleday. **Read pages 97-200**

February 12

- Whitehead, C. (2016). *The Underground Railroad*. New York: Doubleday. **Read pages 201-313**

February 14

- Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban education*, 36(3), 308-342.

February 15 (Friday)

- **Reflective Essay 1 due at 5 PM**

February 19

- Suina, J. H. (2003). The Pueblo people and the dominant culture: Conflict, confusion, and astonishment. *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*, 16(1), 5-10.
- Suina, J. H. (2001). And then I went to school: Memories of a Pueblo childhood. In *The Multicultural Southwest: A Reader*, eds. A. G. Meléndez, M. J. Young, P. Moore, & P. Pynes, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 91-96.

February 21

- Simpson, L. B. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 3(3), 1-25.

February 22 (Friday)

- **Mini-Project 1 (Interview Analysis) due at 5 PM**

February 26

- Clemons, K. M. (2014). I've got to do something for my people: Black women teachers of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 38(3), 141-154.

February 28

- Dumas, M. J. (2014). 'Losing an arm': schooling as a site of black suffering. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 17(1), 1-29.

March 5

- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). The homeland, Aztlán. In *Borderlands: la frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute.
- MacGregor-Mendoza, P. (2000). Aquí no se habla español: Stories of linguistic repression in southwest schools. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 24(4), 355-367.

March 7

- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). How to tame a wild tongue. In *Borderlands: la frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute.
- Esparza, M., Katz, R. (Producers) & Olmos, E. J. (Director) (2006). *Walkout* [Motion picture]. United States (HBO).

March 8 (Friday)

- **Reflective Essay 2 due at 5 PM**

March 12

- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive Schooling: US-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Albany: State University of New York Press. **Read Chs. 1 & 3**

March 14

- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive Schooling: US-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Albany: State University of New York Press. **Read Chs. 4 & 5**

March 26

- Au, W., Brown, A. L., & Calderón, D. (2016). Cultural maintenance or “Americanization”? Transnational curriculum and the “problem” of Chinese American and Japanese American education in the early 20th century. In *Reclaiming the Multicultural Roots of U.S. Curriculum: Communities of Color and Official Knowledge in Education*, New York: Teachers College Press, 46-79.

March 28

- Ngo, B. (2017). The costs of “living the dream” for Hmong immigrants: The impact of subtractive schooling on family and community. *Educational Studies* 53(5), 450-467.

March 29 (Friday)

- **Mini-Project 2** (*Community Walk Photos & Analysis*) due at 5 PM

April 2

- Herbes-Sommers, C., Strain, T. H., & Smith, L. (Directors) (2003). *Race: The Power of an Illusion Episode 3 – The House We Live In* [Television series]. United States: Public Broadcasting Service.

April 4

- McLaren, P. (2015). Critical pedagogy: a look at the major concepts. In *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*, New York: Routledge, 193-205.

April 5 (Friday)

- **Reflective Essay 3** due at 5 PM

April 9

- Renold, E. (2000). 'Coming out': Gender, (hetero)sexuality and the primary school. *Gender and education*, 12(3), 309-326.

April 11

- Ahmed, S. (2017). Feminism is sensational. In *Living a feminist life*, Durham: Duke University Press, 21-42.

April 16

- Garcia, L. (2009). “Now why do you want to know about that?” Heteronormativity, sexism, and racism in the sexual (mis) education of Latina youth. *Gender & Society*, 23(4), 520-541.
- Chasnoff, D., & Cohen, H. S. (Directors) (1996). *It's Elementary*, abridged version [Television broadcast]. United States: New Day Films.

April 18

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers. **Read Preface through Chapter 2.**

April 23

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers. **Read Chapters 3 & 4.**

April 25

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers. **Read Chapter 5 through Chapter 7.**

April 30

- Cervantes Soon, C. (2017). Building a *mujerista* space at Altavista. In *Juárez Girls Rising: Transformative Education in Times of Dystopia*, University of Minnesota Press, 179-210.
- McGinnis, E. (Producer), & Palos, A. (Director) (2011). *Precious Knowledge* [Television broadcast]. United States: Public Broadcasting Service.

May 2

- Hill, M. L. (2009). Wounded healing: Forming a storytelling community in hip-hop lit. *Teachers College Record*, 111(1), 248-293.
- McGinnis, E. (Producer), & Palos, A. (Director) (2011). *Precious Knowledge* [Television broadcast]. United States: Public Broadcasting Service.

May 3 (Friday)

- ***Reflective Essay 4 due at 5 PM***

May 7

- Taliaferro Baszile, D. (2017). In pursuit of the revolutionary-not-yet: Some thoughts on education work, movement building, and praxis. *Educational Studies*, 53(3), 206-215.

May 9

- Pour-Khorshid, F. (2016). HELLA: Collective testimonio that speak to the healing, empowerment, love, liberation, and action embodied by social justice educators of color. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 10(2), 16-32.
- Gumbs, A. P. (2015). Evidence. In *Octavia's brood: Science fiction stories from social movements*, eds. Adrienne Marie Brown & Walidah Imarisha, AK Press, p. 33-41.

May 13 (Monday) - ***Educational Autobiography and Service Learning Record due at 5 PM***