

## ALD 327 Sociocultural Influences on Learning

University of Texas at Austin  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
Fall 2018

**Course Instructor:** Celina Martínez Nichols

**Office Location:** SZB 528M

**Office Hours:** Th 12:30-2:00 or by appt.

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**Days:** Tuesday & Thursday

**Time:** 11:00-12:30 PM

**Location:** SZB 424

**Course Unique #:** 09035

### Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to explore the vital role sociocultural factors play in the learning process. This course will consider how issues related to race, class, gender, culture and sexuality influence the teaching and learning process. Focus will be placed on the experiences faced by student populations that have historically experienced challenges and marginalization in U.S. educational systems. It is expected that at the conclusion of this course, you will have a more comprehensive understanding of the role sociocultural factors have played and continue to play in learning; as well as the perspectives necessary to work effectively with children and youth from all backgrounds.

Throughout the semester, everyone will be called upon to question their own and others' beliefs, and to do so in a respectful manner. It is expected that everyone participates in discussions and activities. Due to the nature of this course, some critical and difficult discussions may arise. Please remember that ideas, not people, are subject to questioning and challenging—please be respectful.

### Cultural Diversity Flag

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

### Course Texts

All articles can be accessed on Canvas. A course reader will also be made available at Jenn's Copy & Binding.

#### Books:

1. Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Students*
2. Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S. Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*

### University Policies

**University Code of Conduct:** The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**Scholastic Honesty:** Students who violate university rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. According to the UT System Regent's Rules and Regulations, "Scholastic Dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism,

collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.” Policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) and inform me, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [<http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/>].

**Religious Holidays:** By UT Austin policy, you must notify me as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Emergency Evacuations:** 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. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform me 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: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

**Behavior Concerns:** If you are concerned about any individual’s behavior in class, please contact me and/or call the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050.

## Expectations and Technology Policy

**Class Expectations:** The success of this course is in large part dependent on the degree to which you attend class and thoughtfully and actively engage in small/large class discussion. This requires that prior to class meetings, you will have read and critically considered the class readings. It is VITALLY important that you attend class in a timely and consistent manner. Grades will reflect the degree to which your class participation is thoughtful, engaging, and critical; as well as assignments are submitted on time and meet specified requirements.

**Technology Policy:** Out of respect for your classmates, your instructor, and the educational process, cell phones must be silenced and put away during class. **You need to be fully present during class.** Laptops and tablets may be used for legitimate classroom purposes such as taking notes, accessing readings, or working on an in-class activity. Inappropriate use of technology is distracting to those seated around you, unprofessional, and will result in a loss of participation points.

## Evaluation

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	93–100%	C+	77–79%
A–	90–92%	C	73–76%
B+	87–89%	C–	70–72%
B	83–86%	D	60–69%
B–	80–82%	F	< 60%

<u>Percent of Grade</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
20%	Class Attendance & Participation	Weekly
15%	Reading Responses	Weekly
10%	Quizzes	On-going
20%	Service Learning Project & Analysis	On-going
15%	Educational Autobiography	11.20.18
20%	Final Reflective Essay	12.13.18

## Assignments

*\*Detailed guidelines and evaluation criteria for assignments will be provided in class. The following descriptions serve as an overview of the expectations for each assignment.*

### **Class Attendance & Participation (20 points)**

**Due:** weekly

Your involvement in class will add to your learning and the learning of those around you. You are expected to complete assigned readings and attend class sessions. That said, attendance alone is not participation. You will receive full points through arriving on time, adhering to the technology policy, and contributing to class activities. Arriving late or leaving class early will result in a loss of participation points.

You may miss one class, with a valid excuse, without penalty. Each additional absence will result in a deduction from your grade. More than 3 absences will result in a failing grade for the class.

### **Reading Responses (15 points)**

**Due:** weekly

You will write and submit reading responses in which you summarize the key ideas from each of the week's readings. These responses should be specific and brief (no lengthy text quotations), and should describe, from your perspective, the authors' central arguments. You should also think across the readings and identify connections or themes emerging from the text. **Reading responses are due in class on Thursdays for a total submission of 10 reading responses.** No late assignments will be accepted. You are not required to submit a reading response for every week of the semester. However, you must still read the assigned texts.

### **Quizzes (10 points)**

**Due:** On-going

You will have pop quizzes over the required class readings on **seven** different occasions. Each quiz is worth 2 points. The two lowest grades and/or missed quizzes will be dropped.

**Service Learning Project & Analysis (20 points)**

**Due:** Service Learning Analysis Part I due October 18<sup>th</sup> & Service Learning Analysis Part II due December 6<sup>th</sup>

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This course includes a **required** 15-hour service learning component. You will need to locate an appropriate location to engage in the service learning **by September 20<sup>th</sup>**. The supervising staff member at your site will be asked to sign off on a form certifying that you have completed your required hours. You will also write five brief reflections on your experiences. Each of the reflections will focus on a different topic, and in each you will combine close observation with careful interpretation and analysis. The reflections will be submitted in two installments.

**Educational Autobiography (15 points)**

**Due:** November 20<sup>th</sup> in class

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You will write an educational autobiography in which you reflect on your life experience as it relates to the topics and ideas discussed in the course. You will explore the relationship between your identity and school experiences. You should address how you identify yourself (e.g., race, class, gender etc.), the kinds of schools you attended, what your experiences were like in these school settings— particularly in relation to the kinds of learning experiences you had, your relationship with teachers and other faculty/staff, as well as with your peers and how your own sociocultural background may have contributed to your schooling experiences. The purpose of this assignment is for us to critically examine our educational trajectories and to place our stories in the wider historical trajectory of the American educational system.

**Final Reflective Essay (20 points)**

**Due:** December 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm

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In this essay you will reflect on what you have learned during the course, and how it has affected your thinking about teaching, learning, and/or schooling. While you will engage with specific course concepts and readings that have made a difference to you, the assignment is subjective in nature, and asks you to describe, from your own perspective, your intellectual and emotional growth in relation to this material.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading
Aug 30	Introduction to the Course	*TED Talk: "The danger of a single story"
Sep 4	Contemporary Discourses in Education	McLaren: Chapter 5 – Critical Pedagogy
Sep 6		A. Brown: "Examining the other: The other in education" Weiner: "Challenging deficit thinking"
Sep 11	Western Knowledge & Schooling	Smith: Chapter 3 – Colonizing Knowledges
Sep 13		Selden: "Eugenics and the social construction of merit, race, and disability"
Sep 18	Racialization & Segregation	Anderson: <i>The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935</i> , p. 4-32
Sep 20		Walker: "Valued segregated schools for African American children in the South, 1935-1969: A review of common themes and characteristics" Fairclough: "The costs of Brown: Black teachers and school integration"
Sep 25	Racialization & Segregation	Gonzales: "Chicano education in the era of segregation", p. 13-29 <u>and</u> p. 157-161 Donato: "Legally white, socially 'Mexican': The politics of de jure and de facto school segregation in the American southwest"
Sep 27		Wollenberg: "'Yellow peril' in the schools" Chang & Au: "You're Asian. How could you fail math? Unmasking the myth of the model minority."
Oct 2	Race, Class & Social Reproduction	MacLeod: "Social reproduction in theoretical perspective", p. 11-24
Oct 4		Lareau: "Social class differences in family-school relationships: The importance of cultural capital" Pittelman & Resource Generation: "Deep thoughts about class privilege"
Oct 9	Cultural Wealth & Funds of Knowledge	Yosso: "Whose culture has capital?"
Oct 11		Moll: "Funds of knowledge for teaching"
Oct 16	Culture, Language & Schooling	Valenzuela: <i>Subtractive Schooling</i> , p. 33-75
Oct 18		Valenzuela: <i>Subtractive Schooling</i> , p. 75-113 <u>and</u> p. 161-181  <i>*Service Learning Analysis Part I due in class*</i>

Oct 23	Culture & Resistance	Valenzuela: <i>Subtractive Schooling</i> , p. 227-245
Oct 25		Solorzano & Delgado Bernal: "Examining transformational resistance"
Oct 30	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	Ladson-Billings: <i>Dreamkeepers</i> , p. 17-84
Nov 1		Ladson-Billings: <i>Dreamkeepers</i> , p. 85-156
Nov 6	Gender & Schooling	Sadker & Zittleman: "Gender bias: From colonial America to today's classroom" Pollard: "Understanding and supporting gender equity in schools"
Nov 8		Ladson-Billings: "Boyz to men? Teaching to restore Black boys' childhood"
Nov 13	Gender, Sexuality & Schooling	Macgillivray: "Educational equity for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and queer/questioning students"
Nov 15		García: "Now why do you want to know about that?: Heteronormativity, sexism, and racism in the sexual (mis)education of Latina youth"
Nov 20		<i>*Educational Autobiography due in class*</i>
Nov 27	Corporatization & Education	Robinson, Urrieta, Counts: "Dropout Nation: The school to prison pipeline, educational reform and caring for African American and Latino students"
Nov 29		Hursh: "Assessing No Child Left Behind and the rise of neoliberal education policies"
Dec 4	Ethnic Studies	Romero, Arce, Cammarota: "A barrio pedagogy: Identity, intellectualism, activism, and academic achievement through the evolution of critically compassionate intellectualism" García, Urrieta, Bybee: "White supremacy, neo/colonial education, and the struggle for precious knowledge"
Dec 6		<i>*Service Learning Analysis Part II due in class*</i>

**\*Note:** Syllabus is subject to change as needed.