



UNSW
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Arts & Social
Sciences

School of Education

EDST5115

Social and Political Contexts of Education

Semester 1, 2017

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IMPORTANT:

For student policies and procedures relating to assessment, attendance and student support, please see website, <https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/>

The School of Education acknowledges the Bedegal and Gadigal people as the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we learn and teach.

1. LOCATION

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
School of Education
EDST5115 Social and Political Contexts of Education (6 units of credit)
Semester 1, 2017

2. STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Course Convenor: Dr Scott Eacott
Office Location: John Goodsell 103
Email: s.eacott@unsw.edu.au
Phone: 9385 80704
Availability: Please email to arrange an appointment

3. COURSE DETAILS

Course Name	Social and Political Contexts of Education	
Credit Points	6 units of credit (uoc)	
Workload	Includes 150 hours including class contact hours, readings, class preparation, assessment, follow up activities, etc.	
Schedule		
Lecture	Saturday 4 March; Saturday 29 April	09:00-10:00, CLB1 14:30-15:30, CLB1
Tutorials	Saturday 4 March; Saturday 29 April	10:30-12:00, MorvB G3; G4; G5 13:00-14:30, MorvB G3; G4; G5

Summary of Course

This course explores the wider historical, political and social context of Australian education and critically examines the social and societal factors that shape students' experiences and outcomes. The course also explores the socio-political contexts of the development and implementation of curriculum and assessment and analyses how recent trends towards marketisation of education and the implementation of national curriculum and assessment policies interact with concerns about access, equity and diversity.

The main ways in which the course has changed since last time as a result of student feedback

- *Revision of course content to more effectively link with other courses and practice;*
- *Restructuring of the online component to support student learning in the course without becoming burdensome;*
- *Revision of assessment to minimise student workload.*

Student Learning Outcomes

Outcome		Assessment/s
1	Describe, discuss and analyse the ways education policy impacts on school systems and structures and teachers, including topics of teacher quality, high stakes testing, accountability and global competition in education.	1
2	Describe, discuss and analyse the political processes that determine what will be the purposes and outcomes of school curriculum.	2

Program Learning Outcomes

Capability		Assessment/s
1	Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the field of education as it relates to their specialist area of study, and the ability to synthesize and apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments.	2
3	Cognitive skills and critical thinking Demonstrate advanced critical thinking and problem solving skills	1,2
5	International outlook Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the educational field	1,2
6	Ethical and responsible professional practice Demonstrate an advanced capacity to recognise and negotiate the complex and often contested values and ethical practices that underlie education	1,2

In addition, students are required to meet the following AITSL focus descriptor for **Proficient** teachers

7.4.2 Participate in professional and community networks and forums to broaden knowledge and improve practice

4. RATIONALE FOR THE INCLUSION OF CONTENT AND TEACHING APPROACH

This course will enable students to develop an understanding of the role that the social and political contexts play in their work as a teacher. The course employs a blended learning approach that enables practising teachers to immediately apply their learning to the context of their workplace.

5. TEACHING STRATEGIES

As in any graduate course, students and faculty need to be co-owners of the class and collectively responsible for its quality and outcomes. I will take responsibility for the overall design and direction of the course and for the academic requirements, but the course will be (primarily) facilitated as a seminar or inquiry in which all participants hold themselves and each other accountable for a rigorous and robust intellectual dialogue and debate.

The format of the class requires that each person come prepared to take an active role in class discussion. This means not only having read the assigned materials, but also being prepared to discuss the salient issues, questions, and problems emerging from the readings and to utilise your knowledge and professional experiences to address the focus questions posed by the lecturer. Class participation (both during face-to-face class and online discussion boards) also involves opening oneself to challenge and to be challenged by the ideas and topics of the seminars.

Background readings

Comer, D.R., & Lenaghan, J.A. (2013). Enhancing discussions in the asynchronous online classroom: The lack of face-to-face interaction does not lessen the lesson. *Journal of Management Education*, 37(2), 261-294.

Eacott, S. (2012). Introducing under-graduate students to school leadership concepts. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 50(2), 159-172.

6. COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

This course employs a *blended learning* approach. It includes two Saturday seminars with collaborative online learning using the MOODLE Learning Management System. Structurally, the course consists of two modules, each with an assessment task: i) Australian education policy; and ii) social portrayals of teachers/teaching.

SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

Module One: Australian Education Policy

Lecture 1a: Introduction to the Course and Overview of Australian Education Policy

Overview: Many educators are unaware of the complexity of the Australian education policy arrangements. This introductory lecture outlines the basic architecture of Australian education.

Focus question: *How does Australian federalism work in education?*

Essential readings

Keating, J., & Klatt, M. (2013). Australian concurrent federalism and its implications for the Gonski review. *Journal of Education Policy*, 28(4), 411-426.

Lingard, B., Porter, P., Bartlett, L., & Knight, J. (1995). Federal/State mediations in the Australian national education agenda: from AEC to MCEETYA 1987-1993. *Australian Journal of Education*, 39(1), 41-66.

Seminar 1a: Multiculturalism as a policy response

Overview: Building on the introductory lecture, this initial seminar aims to illuminate multiculturalism as a social policy response to cultural and linguistic diversity in Australian education.

Focus Question: *How does cultural and linguistic diversity impact on the performance of students?*

Essential readings

- Smolicz, J., & Secombe, M. (2005). Globalisation, cultural diversity and multiculturalism: Australia. In J. Zajada (Ed.), *International handbook of Globalisation, Education and Policy Research* (pp. 207-220). The Netherlands: Springer.
- Leeman, Y., & Reid, C. (2006). Multi/intercultural education in Australia and the Netherlands. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 36(1), 57-72.

Seminar 1b: Schooling and disadvantage

Overview: There are two major schools of thought on the role of schools and disadvantage: *reproduction* and *compensatory*. Understanding these underlying generative principles is important for interventions and their impact (or not) on the outcomes of schooling.

Focus question: *What do you see as the role of systems, schools, and teachers in relation to social disadvantage?*

Essential readings

- Gore, J.G., Holmes, K., Smith, M., Southgate, E., & Albright, J. (2015). Socioeconomic status and the career aspirations of Australian school students: Testing enduring assumptions. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 42(2), 155-177.
- Ladwig, J.G., & Luke, A. (2014). Does improving school level attendance lead to improved school level achievement? An empirical study of indigenous educational policy in Australia. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 41(2), 171-194.

Lecture 1b: Problems and Possibilities in Australian Education

Overview: This lecture will bring the first seminar to a conclusion by providing a synopsis of the content, dialogue and debate, and ongoing possibilities of educators contributing to the social and political contexts of education.

Online Module One [linked to Assessment Task One – details on Moodle]

Topic One: Sector battles

In late December 2016 Kevin Donnelly wrote a piece for *The Australian* claiming that non-government schools work better (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/heres-why-nongovernment-schools-work-better/news-story/2bb048b548d706d1ba6e2fb2291cc714>). This topic is concerned with debating the roles of sector in Australian education.

Topic Two: Teacher Accreditation

In late 2016 the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) featured two blog posts (<http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=1857> and <http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=1942>) on the Professional Standards. This topic has the aim of illuminating the ways in which the Standards are enacting in the day-to-day work of teachers.

Topic Three: Gonski / School Funding

School policy in recent years has been dominated by the distribution of funding – particularly through the lens of equity. Taking stimulus from Bronwyn Hinz analysis from September 2016 (<http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=1774>) this topic is concerned with how school funding impacts on the day-to-day work of teachers.

Topic Four: Curriculum and professional judgement

In January 2017 Nicole Mockler wrote a blog for AARE arguing for greater professional judgement in the development of curriculum (<http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=1984>). Specifically, she raised the idea of teachers as curriculum workers. This topic aims to illuminate the degree of professional judgement you get to exercise in the development of curriculum at school.

Topic Five: Technologies and teaching

Without a doubt, technologies are pitched as the latest major disruption for the teaching profession. Drawing stimulus from work on the “digital footprint” of children / students (e.g., <http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=1938>) this topic is concerned with the impact of technology on teaching.

MODULE TWO: Social Portrayals of Teachers/Teaching

Lecture 2a: Portrayals of teachers

Overview: In January 2017 Federal MP Andrew Lamming caused controversy with a Facebook post saying “Are teachers back at work this week, or are they ‘lesson planning’ from home? Let me know exactly”. In the same week, Senator David Leyonhjelm reduced the work of early childhood educators to “wiping noses and stopping kids from killing each other”. These are far from uncommon critiques of teachers. This module is concerned with portrayals of teachers and teaching in popular media (e.g., television, movies, books).

Focus question: *How do portrayals of teaching in mainstream media reflects the lived experience of teachers?*

Essential reading:

Thomas, A.R. (1998). As they are portrayed: Principals in film. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 12(2), 90-100.

Supplementary readings

Glanz, J. (1997). Images of principals on television and in the movies. *The Clearing House*, 70(6), 295-297.

Shouse, R.C. (2005). Taking Lulu seriously: What can we learn from *To Sir with Love*. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 43(4), 357-367.

Mockler, N. (2014). Simple solutions to complex problems: Moral panic and the fluid shift from ‘equity’ to ‘quality’ in education. *Review of Education*, 2(2), 115-143.

Giroux, H. (1997). Rewriting the discourse of racial identity: Towards a pedagogy and politics of whiteness. *Harvard Education Review*, 67(2), 285-321.

Seminar 2a: Peer marking exercise

Overview: This session is focused on peer-marking of assessment task two.

Seminar 2b: Dialogue and debate on images of teachers

Overview: Building from the peer-marking exercise, this session aims to identify trends in the images of teachers and teaching in mainstream media.

Lecture 2b: Social and Policy Contexts of Education

Overview: This final lecture will bring the course to a conclusion by providing a synopsis of the content, dialogue and debate, and ongoing possibilities of educators contributing to the social and political contexts of education.

7. RESOURCES

Resources cited in this outline and others will be posted to Moodle during the course.

8. ASSESSMENT

Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed	Program Learning Attributes Assessed	Due Date
Assessment 1 Online Discussion	2500 words	50%	1	3,5,6	Each week 2-6
Assessment 2 Essay	2500 words	50%	2	1,3,5,6	05 May 2017

Students are required to follow their lecturer's instructions when submitting their work for assessment. **All assessment will be submitted online via Moodle by 5pm.** Student no longer need to use a cover sheet. Students are also required to keep all drafts, original data and other evidence of the authenticity of the work for at least one year after examination. If an assessment is mislaid the student is responsible for providing a further copy. Please see the Student Policies and Procedures for information regarding submission, extensions, special consideration, late penalties and hurdle requirements etc. <https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/>

Assessment Task One: Online discussion

Word Limit: 2500 words

Due Date: Weekly, beginning week 2

Submission: Online via Moodle

Description

Following the first Saturday seminar, and to complete the first module, you are expected to make regular posts (weekly and topic based) on the course Discussion Board (Moodle) on the reading/s for each of the topics. Discussions will begin with a general stimulus/focus question posted by the lecturer. You are to respond to that stimulus/focus question and it is expected that your contribution will demonstrate both an understanding of the reading/s and sustain group discussion. In addition, you are expected to respond to the post of a peer (therefore, a minimum of two posts per topic). Marks ($n=10$) will be assigned for each of the five topics of Online Module One.

Further details are available on Moodle.

Assessment Task Two: As they are portrayed

Word Limit: 2500 words

Due Date: 05 May 2017, 5pm

Description

Taking stimulus from Ross Thomas' (1998) *As they are portrayed: principals in film*, in this paper you are asked to use relevant sources other than prescribed texts (e.g., movies, television series, books, and so on), describe and analyse a representation of teachers or teaching.

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FEEDBACK SHEET
EDST5115 Social and Political Contexts of Education**

Name:

Assessment Task One

SPECIFIC CRITERIA	- —————> +				
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity and accuracy in use of key terms and concepts. 					
Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depth of understanding of relevant key concepts and principles • clarity and depth of discussion in relation to task questions 					
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference specifically made to material, research and ideas presented in class and associated resources • reference made to relevant readings not on the required or further reading list 					
Structure and organisation of response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriateness of overall structure of paper • clarity and coherence of organisation 					
Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, consistency and appropriateness of conventions for quoting, paraphrasing, attributing sources of information, and listing references • clarity and appropriateness of sentence structure, vocabulary use, spelling, punctuation and word length 					
GENERAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT TIME					

Lecturer

Date

Recommended grade: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD)

Weighting: 50%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. **The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.**

**UNSW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
FEEDBACK SHEET
EDST5115 Social and Political Contexts of Education**

Name:

Assessment Task Two

SPECIFIC CRITERIA	- —————> +				
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity and accuracy in use of key terms and concepts. 					
Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depth of understanding of relevant key concepts and principles • clarity and depth of discussion in relation to task questions 					
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference specifically made to material, research and ideas presented in class and associated resources • reference made to relevant readings not on the required or further reading list 					
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Feedback

Assessment Task	Feedback Mechanism	Feedback Date
One: Online Discussion	Online via Moodle	Weekly
Two: Essay	Online via Moodle	Within three weeks of submission