ANTROPOLOGY AND EDUCATION
EDUC 6325
Fall 2000

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Course Description
The main purpose behind this course is to examine and assess various anthropological lenses as mechanisms for understanding what happens within schools. We will consider how anthropologists have looked at various education-related topics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, adolescents, etc.) as well as the theories that have informed their work (e.g., social reproduction theory, cultural difference theory, etc.).
Most class sessions will include brief lectures, small group work, and whole-class discussions. Classes are designed for active participation, so please come to class prepared to discuss assigned material. Ultimately, you will identify some "educational" issue that might usefully be explored through an anthropological lens and outline how you might study that issue.

Course Readings

Course Requirements

Two-Page Critiques (30% of final grade)
Roughly every fourth week in the course of the semester (4 times) students will submit a 2-page, single-spaced (no longer) critique of whatever author they choose that we have read during those weeks. (It could be the author of books we read or of assigned articles.) This should NOT be a summary of the author’s work, although you may have to explain some of the author’s ideas with which you are dealing. Rather, it should be your focused analysis of some aspect of what the author had to say, an in-depth analysis of some particular aspect of the author’s work. This might include raising questions you feel the author needs to address or which the author’s work suggests for you; drawing on your own knowledge to challenge ideas and/or assumptions put forth by the author; making connections between that author and others we have read; focusing on a particular idea presented by the author and describing the implications of the idea for school reform; and so on.

Class Participation (20% of final grade)
As a general rule, you will be expected not only to do the reading for class but to have thought about the reading. This might entail bringing questions to class that you’d like to raise, making connections with other authors we’ve read, and generally being an active and substantive contributor to class. It is absolutely fine, in fact, it is expected, that you will bring issues, concerns, questions, etc. to class for discussion.

Class Planning and Debriefing
Twice in the course of the semester, students will meet with me to plan the upcoming class. We will get together at some specified time (such as the Friday following class or right after our class meets if you’d like) to discuss what you feel would be important topics to cover in the next class, teaching strategies that might be appropriate, and any other ideas you might have for how the class could most effectively be organized that week. Therefore, you should come to our planning meetings with specific ideas in mind. This should take about a half hour to 45 minutes. You will not be teaching the class. Rather these meetings should offer you an opportunity to develop provocative questions or design activities which you feel will engage the class. PLEASE NOTE: You will need to have completed the reading for that week before we meet to plan the upcoming class. This work will be included as part of your class participation grade. This would also be a time that you could raise other course-related issues with me.

Final Research Paper (55% of final grade)
From the outset of this course you should think about what specific topic in the area of anthropology and education you would like to research (e.g., class size, single-gender schools, experiential education, service learning, etc.). I strongly suggest you choose a topic that motivates you. Ideally, this research can serve as background information for your dissertation and its prospectus. By the time you finish the paper, you should know a great deal about the topic and should have a good idea for what
research in that area says about your topic. The paper should be between 20-30 pages. It should include discussions of (1) the research problem; (2) a statement of purpose; (3) your conceptual framework; and (4) your research questions. It will be due one week after our last class (Wednesday, December 21st).

Course Calendar

August 31: Overview and introduction to course
   Syllabus reviewed; assignments and grading policies outlined; course overview discussed.

September 7: Cultural Difference Theories
   Reading: Heath, pp. 1-262.

September 14: Cultural Difference Theories (cont'd)
   Reading: Heath, pp. 265-369; Weisner, et al. article.

September 21: Social Reproduction Theory
   Reading: MacLeod, pp. 1-136. [Paper #1 due.]

September 28: Social Reproduction Theory (cont'd)
   Reading: MacLeod, pp. 137-185; Vogt, et al. article.

October 5: No Class--Fall Break

October 12: An Anthropological Look at Gender
   Reading: Holland & Eisenhart, pts. 1-3.

October 19: An Anthropological Look at Gender (cont'd)
   Reading: Holland & Eisenhart, pts. 4-6; Eckert article. [Paper #2 due.]

October 26: Issues of Race/Ethnicity and Schooling
   Reading: Fordham, pp. ??.

November 2: Issues of Race/Ethnicity and Schooling (cont'd)
   Reading: Fordham, pp. ??; Ogbu article.

November 9: Students
   Reading: Eckert, pp. vii-ix, 1-134. [Paper #3 due.]

November 16: No Class--AAA Meetings

November 21 (Tuesday): Students (cont'd)
   Reading: Eckert, pp. 135-184; McDermott article.

November 30: Some "Good" Schools
   Reading: Lightfoot.
December 7: Culture as Beliefs and Values
   Reading: McQuillan, pp. xi-148. [Paper #4 due.]

December 14: Culture as Beliefs and Values (cont'd)
   Reading: McQuillan, pp. 123-214; Eisenhart article.

Religious Observance/Cultural Holidays
Religious/cultural holidays are excused but students are asked to give adequate notice to me. Accommodations for other assignments can be made if the amount of notice is sufficient. It is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements ahead of time, and to do so in a way that does not compromise their own learning experience.