

PY 031.04
A COURSE ON FAMILY, SCHOOL, & SOCIETY:
THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING
SPRING 2013

General Information

Instructor: Miriam Tillinger

Email: tillinge@bc.edu

Office: Campion 239

Office Hours: Thursdays 9:30-11:30am or by appointment

Class Meeting Location: Campion 204

Course Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00 – 1:15pm

Course Description and Goals

This is the second part of a two-course sequence (PY030-PY031) designed to introduce students to the multiple dimensions of child development in today's society, including the place of education in promoting healthy development for all children. A central theme of these courses is that contemporary children have diverse and complex developmental needs that must be addressed through a constellation of services in which education can play a coordinating role.

In this course we consider the social and cultural contexts that shape developmental and educational processes. The primary focus will be on understanding the nature of contemporary social problems including racism, sexism, ethnic prejudice, social class oppression, and ability discrimination as they affect children, families, and schooling. Emphasis will be given to the special role of education in linking community resources for an integrated approach to these problems in children's lives.

Required Readings

1. *Spelling Love with an X*, Clare Dunsford
2. *All Souls*, Michael Patrick MacDonald
3. *Among Schoolchildren*, Tracy Kidder
4. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, Anne Fadiman: **Ch's 1, 3-9, 11, 13, 15, 17-19**
5. *Whatever it Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America*, Paul Tough: **Ch's 4, 5, 7, 9-11**
7. Additional readings posted on Blackboard Vista or available on the Internet

Class Schedule of Topics and Readings

The following section outlines the topics that will be covered in this course and a tentative class schedule. Please note that although every attempt will be made to adhere to this schedule, some changes may be necessary as the semester progresses. Because this course largely follows a seminar format, the pace at which we get through various topics may vary depending on students' interests. You will be notified of any changes ahead of time. **Readings are to be completed by the indicated date.**

DATE DUE

TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Tuesday, January 15th

COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

Thursday, January 17th

ECOLOGICAL THEORY

Readings: (1) Bronfenbrenner (1994)
(2) Begin *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

Tuesday, January 22nd

GENDER: Gender Differences in School Achievement

Readings: (1) Conlin (2003)
(2) Halpern (2011)
(3) Continue *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

DUE: Discussion Questions - Gender

Thursday, January 24th

GENDER: Gender Stereotypes

Readings: (1) Steele (1997)
(2) Montgomery (2004)
(3) Continue *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

DUE: Discussion Questions – Gender

Tuesday, January 29th

PARENTING: Family Structure

Readings: (1) Amato (2005)
(2) Continue *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

DUE: Discussion Questions - Parenting

Thursday, January 31st

PARENTING: Parent Involvement in Schools

Guest Speaker: Erin McDonald

Readings: (1) Hill & Taylor (2004)
(2) Continue *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

Tuesday, February 5th

**PARENTING: Cultural Perspectives on Parenting – Discussion of
*The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down***

Readings: (1) Finish *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

Thursday, February 7th

**DISABILITIES: Education of Children with Disabilities – History
and Policy**

Readings: (1) IDEA History
(2) Begin *Spelling Love with an X*

DUE: Discussion Questions – Disabilities

Tuesday, February 12th

DISABILITIES: Inclusion

Readings: (1) Belkin (2004)
(2) Continue *Spelling Love with an X*

Thursday, February 14th

DISABILITIES: Parenting

Readings: (1) Bourke-Taylor et al. (2010)
(2) Continue *Spelling Love with an X*

DUE: Reaction Paper – *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

Tuesday, February 19th

DISABILITIES: Discussion of *Spelling Love with an X*

Readings: (1) Finish *Spelling Love with an X*

Thursday, February 21 st	SOCIAL CLASS: Trends and Consequences <u>Readings:</u> (1) NCCP (2011) (2) Brooks-Gunn & Duncan (1997) (3) Begin <i>All Souls</i> DUE: Discussion Questions – Social Class
Tuesday, February 26 th	SOCIAL CLASS: Policy <i>Guest Speaker: Caitlin Lombardi</i> <u>Readings:</u> (1) CBPP (2012) (2) Continue <i>All Souls</i>
Thursday, February 28 th	SOCIAL CLASS: In Class Activity DUE: Reaction Paper – <i>Spelling Love with an X</i>
Tuesday, March 5 th	NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK
Thursday, March 7 th	NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK
Tuesday, March 12 th	SOCIAL CLASS: Discussion of <i>All Souls</i> <u>Readings:</u> (1) Finish <i>All Souls</i> DUE: Proposal for Intervention Project
Thursday, March 14 th	SOCIAL CLASS: Education and Opportunity <u>Readings:</u> (1) Kozol (2005) (2) Begin <i>Whatever it Takes</i> DUE: Discussion Questions – Social Class
Tuesday, March 19 th	SOCIAL CLASS: The Public Education System <u>Readings:</u> (1) Continue <i>Whatever it Takes</i>
Thursday, March 21 st	SOCIAL CLASS: The Public Education System <u>Readings:</u> (1) Continue <i>Whatever it Takes</i>
Tuesday, March 26 th	SOCIAL CLASS: Discussion of <i>Whatever it Takes</i> <u>Readings:</u> (1) Finish <i>Whatever it Takes</i> DUE: Reaction Paper – <i>All Souls</i>
Thursday, March 28 th	NO CLASS, EASTER BREAK
Tuesday, April 2 nd	RACE & CULTURE: Racism, Power, and Privilege <u>Readings:</u> (1) Yamato (1988) (2) McIntosh (1989) (3) Begin <i>Among Schoolchildren</i> DUE: Discussion Questions – Race & Culture
Thursday, April 4 th	RACE & CULTURE: Education <u>Readings:</u> (1) Steele (1992) (2) Lee (1994) (3) Continue <i>Among Schoolchildren</i> DUE: Discussion Questions – Race & Culture

Tuesday, April 9 th	RACE & CULTURE: Bilingual Education <i>Guest Speaker: Cristina Hunter</i> DUE: Reaction Paper – <i>Whatever it Takes</i>
Thursday, April 11 th	RACE & CULTURE: Discussion of <i>Among Schoolchildren</i> <u>Readings:</u> (1) Finish <i>Among Schoolchildren</i>
Tuesday, April 16 th	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
Thursday, April 18 th	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
Tuesday, April 23 rd	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS DUE: Reaction Paper – <i>Among Schoolchildren</i>
Thursday, April 25 th	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
Tuesday, April 30 th	FINAL CLASS: REFLECTION DUE: Intervention Paper

Course Requirements and Grading

Discussion Questions: 10%

In-Class Writing Assignments/Quizzes: 5%

Reaction Papers: 45 %

Breakdown:

Reaction Paper 1- 15%

Reaction Paper 2- 15%

Reaction Paper 3- 15%

Intervention Project: 25%

Breakdown:

Intervention Proposal- 5%

Intervention Final Paper and Presentation- 20%

Attendance: 5%

Class Participation: 10%

Description of Course Requirements

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font and double spaced with 1" margins on all sides. Assignments are due at the beginning of class (12:00 pm) in hard copy format. Additionally, they need to be posted electronically on Blackboard Vista prior to class. Anything handed in later than this time will be considered 1 day late. For each day late you lose 10 points. You are responsible for assignments even if you cannot be in class on the day they are due. If you cannot be in class, please upload your assignment to Blackboard before class time so it will not counted as late. **THE FINAL EXAM WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE.**

1. Discussion Questions

On the days noted in the syllabus, you are expected to generate at least one discussion question directly related to the readings for each topic. *Questions should be about articles and other assigned readings, not about the books.* You should actively read each assignment, underlining interesting points and noting any reactions that you have to what's being said. Your questions should be posted on the Discussion Board on the Blackboard Vista website no later than 9:00pm the night before class meets. In addition, you are expected to bring a hard copy of your question to class to be handed in. Since this course is largely run as a seminar, I will frequently rely on these questions and insights to guide our discussions. Often, I will randomly call on individual students to pose their discussion questions to the class.

2. In-Class Writing Assignments

At random times during the semester, there will be short, unannounced writing assignments that will be based on the assigned reading(s) for that day. If you are not in class to complete the assignment, you will receive a zero.

3. Reaction Papers

You are required to write reaction papers based on three out of the five books we will read this semester. I will distribute handouts with questions for you to address for each of the five books, but you only need to choose three books to write papers on throughout the semester. You will be expected to critically analyze broad issues/themes addressed in the book and to incorporate information from other course readings and class discussions. Each reaction paper should be about 3-4 pages (12 pt., double-spaced) in length (**Due dates: Feb. 14th, Feb. 28th, Mar. 26th, Apr. 9th, Apr. 23rd**).

4. Intervention Project and Paper

In small groups (2-3), you will design a research-based intervention/prevention program that will address one of the topic areas covered in this course. You will use resources and notes from class as well as your own independent research to define a specific social problem and then develop a program to address that problem. You will clearly define the target audience (e.g., teachers, policy makers, students, parents, etc.), and the methods and activities that comprise the programs (e.g., lessons, skills training, counseling services, etc), and specific plans for assessing the effectiveness of your program. For example, you could outline plans for an after-school program to prevent bullying. Or, you could develop a curriculum unit for kindergarteners that promotes understanding of diverse family structures. The options are endless, and I encourage you to be creative in your approach to this project. You can decide whether to design a family, school, or community-based program, or perhaps you will encompass multiple contextual levels in your program.

You will first write a proposal outlining your ideas for your program (**Due March 12th**). Your final project will include a paper, visual aids, and a short presentation. Presentations will take place on **April 16, April 18, April 23, and April 25th**. Your final paper is due on the last day of class (April 30th), regardless of when you present. Specific requirements for this paper and project will be provided.

6. Attendance, Class Participation, Exercises, & Discussion Groups

This class will largely be run in a seminar format. Class discussion and reactions to the readings will be central to the course. Therefore, attendance is vital to the success of the course and to your success. Attendance will be taken regularly and used along with class participation in your final grade. Please make sure that you do the assigned reading by the date specified so that you can contribute to the class discussions. You will not be able to participate adequately if you have not done the reading. It is also important that you make an effort to speak in class, as we will all benefit from hearing the thoughts and opinions of everyone. Active participation in class discussion groups is vital.

Respect one another!!! Please help me create a class climate that feels safe and supportive for everyone. We will often be discussing issues that are value-laden, sensitive, and even controversial, and it is critical that each member of the class feels comfortable expressing his or her individual viewpoint. Remember that it is our privilege to be exposed to diverse perspectives. Please be mindful and respectful of others during class discussions and activities.

Additional Information

Electronics Policy:

Phones must be away in a bag, not on your person, and set on SILENT. Laptop computers will not be permitted in the classroom.

Course Website Information:

Course materials can be found on the Blackboard Vista site for this course: **PY031.04 Family School and Society**. If you encounter any difficulties with Blackboard Vista, please email cms@bc.edu.

Students with Disabilities:

Boston College students who need special resources to accommodate specific learning challenges should visit the Connors Family Learning Center www.bc.edu/connors or, for other special needs, one of the other offices at the university - for a list and email links (see <http://www.bc.edu/offices/odsd/disabilityservices/resources.html>). If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Kathy Duggan (Kathleen.duggan@bc.edu) Associate Director, Academic Support Services, the Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities and ADHD) or Paulette Durrett (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism Statement:

Students should consult the university policies on Academic Integrity (see <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy.html#integrity>) and that of the Lynch School of Education (http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/academics/phd_policies.html#integrity) for a discussion of academic integrity. There will be no exceptions to these policies. Please also note specific additional www resources on the Responsible Conduct of Research (<http://www.bc.edu/research/oric/rcr.html>) as well as those within your individual disciplines.

Academic Grievances:

Any student who believes he or she has been treated unfairly in academic matters should consult with the chairperson of the undergraduate or graduate department or his or her associate dean to discuss the situation and to obtain information about relevant grievance procedures.