

EDUC 601: Critical Theory and Educational Research

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Lead and Section Instructor Contact Information

James Fabionar – jfabionar@sandiego.edu

Office Hours – Thursdays from 4 to 6 PM online or by appointment. You can find me online on Blackboard Collaborate. I will also hold one-hour online discussion/check-in session every other Tuesday from 4-5 PM beginning 9/17. These sessions will be recorded if you cannot make it.

Email

All messages will be answered within 48 hours, including weekends. It is imperative that you log into Blackboard regularly to check your correspondence.

Course Description & Learning Outcomes

Course Description

This seminar introduces first-year doctoral students to critical theoretical frameworks in educational research and praxis. Critical theories are often distinguished from “traditional” theories by their goal of unmasking ideologies that falsely justify forms of domination. Contemporary criticalists ground their work in scholarship from the Frankfurt School, an intellectual hub in the 1920s and 30s widely credited with extending Marxian thinking from its classical emphasis on materialism and structural inequality to processes of cultural production and the maintenance of oppressive social relations. This tradition has been adopted by and adapted for a range of social movements around the globe, including resistance efforts to domination related to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, nationality (nationalisms, displacement, colonization, borders, etc.), gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, and other social identities. This course explores how education scholars take up frameworks from these adaptations to uncover, critique, and dismantle dimensions of oppression in educational contexts.

Course Goals

- To establish a supportive intellectual community
- To introduce forms of scholarly work such as the dissertation, literature review, journal article, empirical research, etc.
- To ground your doctoral education in philosophical and theoretical thinking
- To model and practice framing scholarly inquiries with an adopted or constructed theoretical model
- To begin developing strategies for grappling with the ambiguities (inexactness) and complexities (intricateness) involved with knowledge production

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Trace elements of critical theoretical frameworks such as critical race theory, critical feminism, queer theory, critical disability studies, etc. to critical social theory
- Build a critical theoretical framework and apply these ideas to an original literature review to generate new understandings about a contemporary educational problem
- Analyze seminal texts and empirical studies to understand how to develop scholarly arguments and inquiries

- Develop and summarize formal search, selection, and review processes to compose a detailed critical literature review
- Present critical literature review findings and reflect on your learning and development over the semester

Online Learning Requirements

For success in this course, you must be able to navigate and search the web, use email, attach and upload documents, download and save files, and have access to and use Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. You are also expected to be familiar with web-based multimedia and related video-production software, as well as free downloadable communication systems such as Skype. Please refer to the new student orientation course if you have questions on any of these items.

Course Texts

All required texts have been digitized for this course. You do not need to purchase any texts. However, if you would like to build your library, the texts below were central to the development of the course:

Anyon, J. (2009). *Theory and Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Explanation*. Routledge: New York.

Yosso, T. (2006). *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline*. Routledge: New York

Leonardo, Z. (2013). *Race Frameworks: A Multidimensional Theory of Racism and Education*. Teachers College Record: New York.

MacLeod, J. (2004). *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood*. Westview: Boulder. Second Edition.

Course Grading and Evaluation

Grading Criteria

The following are activities to assess your learning. They include interactive activities to support your learning with and from peers and assignments. These activities mimic the types of activities one would encounter in a traditional onsite Ph.D. seminar. Discussion activities are not evaluated. Rather, they are designed for you to take control of your own learning. In addition to these activities, you have six assignments that will be evaluated and graded. These assignments are comprised of draft work for the components of semester-long literature review project. All graded activities include rubrics, which will be located in the activity instructions. Each assignment is worth 100 points and the weights of the grade are adjusted as follows:

Categories	Percentage
Participation	20%
Assignments (6)	50%
Final Reflection and Critical Literature Review	30%
Total	100%

Grading Breakdown

Letter Grade	100
A	93
A-	90
B+	88
B	83
B-	80
C+	78
C	73
C-	70
D+	68
D	63
D-	60
F	59

Make-Up & Late Work

Late assignments will NOT be accepted unless there are significant extenuating circumstances that have been discussed with the instructor in advance of the assignment deadline.

Grade of Incomplete

The grade of Incomplete (“I”) may be recorded to indicate (1) that the requirements of a course have been substantially completed but, for a legitimate reason, less than 25% of the work remains to be completed, and, (2) that the record of the student in the course justifies the expectation that he or she will complete the work and obtain the passing grade by the deadline. It is the student’s responsibility to explain to the instructor the reasons for non-completion of work and to request an incomplete grade prior to the posting of final grades. Students who receive a grade of incomplete must submit all missing work **no later than the end of the second week of the next semester**, otherwise the “I” grade will become a permanent “F.”

Extra Credit

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this course.

SOLES Graduate Student Writing Center

The SOLES Graduate Student Writing Center is a virtual space designed to accommodate both online, or on-campus graduate students for whom distance or busy schedules conflict with coming to campus. The Center's free web-based service provides students with feedback on digital versions of their written course assignments and offers one-on-one coaching sessions via remote conferencing.

To get started, please visit the SOLES Graduate Student Writing Center and complete the submission form. <http://www.sandiego.edu/soles/current/writing-center.php>

OS Operating System: OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard), OS X 10.7 (Lion), OS X 10.8 (Mountain Lion), 10.9 (Mavericks), and 10.10 (Yosemite). CPU: Intel processor, RAM: 4GB, Hard Drive: 1GB or higher available space

Course Outline

Module 0: Professor Introduction and Course Overview

Module 1: The Role of Theory in Educational Scholarship

Module 2: Critical Theory: Key Themes and Concepts in Historical Context

Module 3: Critical Theoretical Frameworks: An Overview

Module 4: Critical Theoretical Frameworks in Educational Research – Part I: Methodology

Module 5: Critical Theoretical Frameworks in Educational Research – Part II: Analysis

Module 6: Critical Theoretical Frameworks in Educational Research – Part III: Findings and Implications

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