

EDUC 4000/5000 EDUCATIONAL INQUIRY 2: ADVANCED TOPICS*

Advocacy and Activism for Educational Liberation

Syllabus One-Pager

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public discourse has much to say about the "woes" facing education, particularly publicly provided education, and who's at fault. What gets much less attention are the ways in which those most familiar with education and its current realities—students, parents, teachers, community members—have worked together to pursue educational change that works toward justice. This course focuses on this avenue toward education reform, including the contemporary and historical efforts of groups from marginalized backgrounds to act for change. This course takes a critical stance toward the study of educational (in)equity. This critical orientation is informed by an Ethnic Studies framework, which in addition to considering other forms of power, emphasizes 1) humanization (understanding the lived experiences of those involved in and affected by struggles for educational justice) and 2) critical consciousness (understanding ourselves, the world around us, and possibilities for transformational change) in the pursuit of educational and racial justice.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Is justice-oriented change possible in education?
- What does justice-oriented change in education look like?
- How should we pursue justice-oriented change in education?

COURSE UNITS

- Understanding Educational Inequities
- Situating Educational Inequities
- Collective Action as a Social Change Strategy
- Community Organizing toward Educational Justice

FOUNDATIONAL TEXTS

- It's Not About Grit: Trauma, Inequity, and the Power of Transformative Teaching (Goodman, 2018)
- The Strike that Changed New York: Blacks, Whites, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Crisis (Podair, 2002)
- Mothers United: An Immigrant Struggle for Socially Just Education (Dyrness, 2011)

Summary Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze K12 educational policy and discourse through a lens of justice and equity.
- Articulate current equity problems in policy and practice in US K12 systems.
- Detail the multiple factors and contextual realities that drive pursuit of educational justice.
- Make evidence-backed claims in relation to educational opportunity, policy, and practice.
- Determine, represent, and support one's personal stand on controversial educational issues.
- Communicate respectfully and effectively across lines of ideological and identity difference and with a variety of stakeholders about controversial educational issues and policies.

Course Assignments

- Active Participation
- Weekly Reading Analyses
- Discussion Facilitation
- Semester-long Educational Advocacy Project

* MU Core Discovery Tier Course; Writing Intensive; Fulfills Individual and Communities Social Science requirement