

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

EDUC 874
The Achievement Gap (3 credits)
Fall 2016
Thursday, 4:30-7:10 PM
Thompson Hall 2020

Instructor: Linda J. Mann, Ph.D.
Phone: 703.593.2754
Email: lmann4@gmu.edu
Office hours: by appointment
Meeting location: Arlington or Fairfax Campus

Prerequisite: None

EDUC 874. The Achievement Gap. In this class students consider “the achievement gap” as a popularized mainstream narrative in U.S. education research, policy, and practice. Grounded in research documenting the legacy of inequalities in America’s schools and the achievement gap’s conceptualization as a problem to be studied and solved, the course considers the historical roots and reproduction of school inequities by race, class, culture, ability, language, ableism, and other forms of difference. Students engage in cross-disciplinary research studies, perspectives, and frameworks to interrogate the historical, political, and structural dimensions of the achievement gap and what might be done to close it. *Instructor: Dr. Linda Mann.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Focuses on achievement gap in schools. Students research and analyze gaps in student achievement related to race and ethnicity, limited English proficiency, family background, gender, poverty, and ableism, and practices designed to close the gap.

- Urban dictionary: Ableism is the discrimination or prejudice against people *who have disabilities*. Ableism can take the form of ideas and assumptions, stereotypes, attitudes. These attitudes are practiced by the dominant population and serve to devalue and limit the potential of persons.

DELIVERY METHOD:

This course is a doctoral seminar, and my teaching style revolves around the concept of creating a classroom of scholars. As such it is expected that you will read all assignments in advance of class, substantively contribute to classroom dialogue, and practice reflexivity as you try to sort through the findings of one study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, I expect you to participate fully in group, pair, and individual projects, Internet research, analyses of case studies, and reflections on practice. I use GMU’s web-accessible

Blackboard course (<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>) framework; all reading assignments are posted for you to read in advance of our discussions.

LEARNER OUTCOMES or OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Develop a historic understanding of the struggle for equality in public education.
- Develop an understanding of the achievement gap in schools today including, its causes, its effects, its solutions, and the implications for policy formation;
- Deconstruct and explore in detail one aspect of the achievement gap, e.g. poverty, race, gender, teacher quality, student assessment practices, etc.;
- Explore the resegregation of public schools and its implications to the gap.
- Explore “gap-generated” school reform models for their promise and for the barriers that need to be addressed;
- Prepare an in-depth analysis of one aspect of the gap related to her/his local setting.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Achieve. (2012). *Closing the expectations gap*. Washington, DC: Author.

Aronson, J., Cohen, G., McColsky, W., Montrosse, B., Lewis, K., and Mooney, K. (2009). *Reducing stereotype threat in classrooms: a review of social-psychological intervention studies on improving the achievement of Black students* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2009–No. 076). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>

Bamat, D. (2012, October 9). Two lives diverged. *Education Week*, 32(7), 22-23.

Barton, P. E., & Coley, R. J. (2010). *The Black and White achievement gap: When progress stopped*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. www.ets.org/research/pic

Berliner, D. C. (2009). *Poverty and potential: Out-of-school factors and school success*. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit. Retrieved [date] from <http://epicpolicy.org/publication/poverty-and-potential>

Blais, D. (2006). Ivory tower: Lessons for a teacher. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-30-fall-2006/ivory-tower-lessons-teacher>, on July 8, 2011.

Braun, H., Chapman, L., Vezzu, S. (2010). *The Black-White achievement gap revisited*. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 18(21) Appendix C, 65- 96.

Brunner, H. (2013, January 29) Equal Internet access is a K-12 must-have. *Education Week*, 32(19), 24-25

- Burrus, J., & Roberts, R. D. (2012, February). *Dropping out of high school: Prevalence, risk factors and remediation strategies*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Butrymowicz, S. (2012, March 19). The little district that could: How one Kansas district keeps a near-perfect record on state exams. Retrieved from http://hechingerreport.org/content/the-little-district-that-could-how-one-district-keeps-a-near-perfect-record-on-state-exams_8164/
- Cohen, G., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., and Master, A. (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social-psychological intervention. *Science*, *313*, 1307-1310.
- Cole, R., Kemple, J. J., Segeritz, M. D. (2012, June). Assessing the early impact of School of One: Evidence from three school-wide pilots. New York, NY: Research Alliance for New York City Schools, New York University.
- Coleman, J. (1987). Families and schools. *Educational Researcher*, *16*(6), 32-38.
- Cookson, P. (2011). Madison was right: Why we urgently need a national vision for public education. *Teachers College Record*. <http://www.tcrecord.org> ID Number: 16392.
- Christensen, C., Horn, M., & Johnson, C. (2008). *Disrupting class*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Desimone, L., & Long, D. A. (2010). Teacher effects and the achievement gap: Do teacher and teaching quality influence the achievement gap between Black and White and high- and low-SES students in the early grades? *Teachers College Record*, *112*(12), 3024-3073.
- Fairclough, A. (2000). "Being in the field of education and also being a ...seems...tragic": Black teachers in the Jim Crow south. *The Journal of American History*, *87*(1) 65-91.
- Fairclough, A. (2004). The costs of *Brown*: Black teachers and school integration. *Journal of American History*, *91*(1) 1-12.
- Ferguson, R. (2007). Parenting practices, teenage lifestyles, and academic achievement among African American children. *Focus*, *25*(1), 18-26.
- Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. U. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of 'acting white'". *Urban Review*, *18*(3), 176-206.
- Fultz, M. (2007). The displacement of Black educator's post-Brown: An overview and analysis. *History of Education Quarterly*, *44*(1) 11-45.
- Fryer, R. (2012). *Learning from the successes and failures of charter schools*. Washington, DC: Brookings.

- Galluzzo, G. R. (2011, March 1). For federal turnaround funds, think locally. *Education Week*, 28.
- Greer, C. (August 7, 2012). *10 ways school reformers get it wrong*. Retrieved from <http://newwf.org/blog/2012-08-07-10-ways-school-reformers-get-it-wrong> on August 7, 2012.
- Hagelskamp, C., & DiStasi, C. (2012). *Failure is not an option*. New York, NY: Public Agenda.
- Hamilton, L., & Mackinnon, A. (2013). *Opportunity by design: New high school models for student success*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- Hassel, B.C., & Hassel, E.A. (2010). *Opportunity at the top*. Chapel Hill, NC: Public Impact.
- Headden, S. (2006, February 20). Two guys...and a dream. *U.S. News and World Report*, 140(6), 41-46.
- Henig, J. R. (2008). *What do we know about the outcomes in KIPP schools?* Retrieved from http://greatlakescenter.org/docs/Policy_Briefs/Henig_Kipp.pdf
- Jaschik, S. (2009, August 10). The parent gap. *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/08/10/parents>
- Kopp, W. (2005, November 13). Poor kids aren't dolts -- push them harder. Los Angeles, CA: *Los Angeles Times*.
- Kristof, N. D. (2012, January 21). How Mrs. Grady transformed Olly Neal. *New York Times*.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Association*, 32(3) 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. and Tate, W.F. IV (1995). Toward a critical race theory, *Teachers College Record* 97 (1) 47-68.
- Lareau, A. (2002, Oct). Invisible inequality: Social class and child rearing in black families and white families. *American Sociological Review*, 67(5), 747-776.
- Lee, J. S., & Bowen, N. K. (2006). Parental involvement, cultural capital, and the achievement gap among elementary school children. *American Educational Research Journal*, 43, 193-218.
- Lynn, M., Bacon, J. N., Totten, T. L. Bridges, T. L., and Jennings, M. E., (2010). Examining teachers' beliefs about African American male students in a low-performing high school in an African American school district. *Teachers College Record*, 112(1), 37-51.
- McLester, S. (2011, March). Learning gets personal. *District Administration*. Retrieved from <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/learning-gets-personal>

- National Center for Education Statistics (2013). *The nation's report card: Trends in academic progress 2012* (NCES 2013 456). Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
- National Research Council. (2012, July). *Education for life and work*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Nelson, A. (2006, Fall). Overcoming the income gap. *Infobrief*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Neuman, S. B., & Celano, D. C. (2012, Fall). Worlds apart. *American Educator*, 13-23.
- Patterson, J.A., Mickelson, K.A., Hester, M.L. & Wyrick, J. (2010). Remembering teachers in a segregated school: Narrative of womanist pedagogy. *Urban Education*, 46(3) 267- 291. doi: 10. 1177/0042085910377511
- Plucker, J. A., Burroughs, N., & Song, R. (2010). *Mind the (other) gap: The growing excellence gap in K-12 education*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy.
- Pratt, R. A. (1991). A promise unfulfilled: school desegregation in Richmond, Virginia, 1956-1986, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 99(4) 415- 448.
- Public Agenda. (2013). *Failure is not an option*. New York, NY: Author.
- Putman, H., Hansen, M., Walsh, K. and Quintero, D. (2016). High hopes and harsh realities: The real challenges to building a diverse workforce. Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Ramirez, G., & Beilock, S. (2011). Writing about testing worries boosts exam performance in the classroom. *Science*, 331, 211-213. DOI: 10.1126/science.1199427
- Reardon, S. F. (2011). The widening academic achievement gap between the rich and the poor: New evidence and possible explanations. In G.J. Duncan & R.J. Murnane (Eds). *Whither opportunity? Rising inequality, schools, and children's life chances*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Schechter, S., & Sherri, D. (2009). Value added? Teachers' investments in and orientations toward parent involvement in education. *Urban Education*, 44(1), 59-87.
- Sparks, S. (2013, July 29). Drop out indicators found for 1st graders. *Education Week*, 32(22), 37.
- Strauss, V. (2013, August 1). The problem with “the problem with problem teachers”. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/08/01/the-problem-with-the-problem-with-teachers/>
- Tanenbaum, C., Le Floch, K., & Boyle, A. (2013). *Are personalized learning environments the*

- next wave of K–12 education reform?* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
- The New Teacher Project. (2012). *The irreplaceables*. Retrieved from <http://tntp.org/irreplaceables>
- Theoharis, G. (2010). Disrupting injustice: Principals narrate the strategies they use to improve their schools and advance social justice. *Teachers College Record*, 112, 331-373
- Tough, P. (2013). Teachers aren't the problem. *Salon*, Retrieved from http://www.salon.com/2012/09/05/teachers_arent_the_problem/singleton/
- Turner, K. M. (2003). "Getting it straight": Southern black school patrons and the struggle for equal education in the pre- and post- civil rights eras. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 72(2), 217-229.
- Tuttle, C. C., Gill, B., Gleason, P., Knechtel, V., Nichols-Barrer, I., Resch, A. (2013, February). *KIPP middle schools: Impacts on achievement and other outcomes*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica.
- Silva, E., & Headden, S. (2011). *Reimagining the school day: More time for learning*. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.
- von Zastrow, C. (2009, September 30). *Parents as turnaround specialists: Ricardo LeBlanc-Esparza tells us how it's done*. Retrieved from <http://www.learningfirst.org/parents-turnaround-specialists-ricardo-leblanc-esparza-tells-us-how-it-s-done>
- Ware, M., & Patel, R. (2012, March). *Does more money matter?* New York, NY: MDRC.
- Welsh, P. (2009, October 18). *Making the grade isn't about Race. it's about parents*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/15/AR2009101503477_pf.html
- Welsh, P. (2010, March 21). *At T.C. Williams High School, a 'low achieving' label is a wake-up call*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/19/AR2010031901362.html>
- Wildhagen, T. (2012). How teachers and schools contribute to racial differences in the realization of academic potential. *Teachers College Record*, 114, 1810-1831.
- Yatvin, J. (2009, October 23). Rediscovering the 'Pygmalion Effect'. *Education Week*, 29(9), 24-25.
- Young, E. Y. (2011). The four personae of racism: Educators' (mis)understanding of individual vs. systemic racism. *Urban Education*, 46, 1433-1460.
- Zeller, T. (2012, March 1). *For America's least fortunate, the grip of poverty spans generations*. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/01/american-poverty-rate_n_1304269.html

Suggested Readings (and many more on blackboard “documents” and “weblinks”)

- Barton, P. (2003). *Parsing the achievement gap*. Princeton: Educational Testing Service.
- Borman, G., Hewes, C., Overman, L., Brown, S. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement*. Baltimore, MD: CRESPAR, Johns Hopkins University.
- Brunner, H. (January 31, 2013). Equal internet access is a K-12 must-have. Education Week, pp. 24-25. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/01/30/19brunner.h32.html>.
- Carter, P. (2007). *Keepin' it real*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Chenoweth, K. (2007). *It's being done*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Chenoweth, K. (2009). *How it's being done*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Contreras, F. (2011). *Achieving equity for Latino students*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Education Commission of the States. (August, 2003). *Research sheds new light on Hispanic-White achievement gap*. Denver, CO: Author.
- Education Trust. (2005). *Stalled in secondary*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Gamoran, A. (ed.) (2007). *Standards-based reform and the poverty gap: Lessons from No Child Left Behind*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Harris, A. (2011). *Kids don't want to fail: Oppositional culture and the Black-White achievement gap*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Howard, T. C. (2010). *Why race and culture matter in schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Jencks, C., & Philips, M. (1998). *The black-white test score gap*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Loveless, T., & Chubb, J. (2002). *Bridging the achievement gap*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Perry, T., Steele, C. & Hilliard, A. (2004). *Young, gifted, and black*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Programme for International Student Assessment. (2005). *Learning for tomorrow's world*. Paris, France: Organization for Economic and Co-operation and Development.
- Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

Thernstrom, A., & Thernstrom, S. (2004). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in learning*. New York, NY: Simon & Shuster.

Wagner, T. (2010). *The global achievement gap*. New York, NY: Basic Books

Wiedeman, C. R. (2002). Teacher preparation, social justice, equity: A review of the literature. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35, 200-211. doi:10.1080/713845323

Recommended Text: Publication of the American Psychological Association. 6th ed. (2009).

Additional readings posted on <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Additional Online Resources

The Center for Education Policy. <http://www.cep-dc.org> ; The Center on Education Policy is a national, independent advocate for public education and for more effective public schools. The Center helps Americans better understand the role of public education in a democracy and the need to improve the academic quality of public schools. It does not represent any special interest groups.

Childstats. <http://childstats.gov>; The website of the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics.

Harvard Family Research Project. <http://www.hfrp.org/> ; The Harvard Family Research Project is a very good source for information about “out of school” time and issues related to students and their families.

Kids Count. <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount> ; A report on the condition of children in the US from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov> . This website is the home of the nation’s report card. Most statistics on the condition of education can be found at NCES.

Great Teachers and Leaders. <http://www.gtlcenter.org/>; A service of the American Institute for Research concerning teacher quality, effectiveness, and evaluation.

REL Midwest: <http://www.relmidwest.org/> ; Formerly the North Central Region Educational Laboratory, this is another very good site for school reform.

Many others are posted on blackboard for your perusal and information.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:

Your primary assignment and the culmination of your coursework is to prepare a 15-20--page paper on one dimension of the achievement gap that is found in your own school or (if you're not working in a school) that is an area of interest for you. **(Due date: December 8, 2016)**

Completion of this proposal is divided into four related tasks (see below for details.) In the final paper, you will explore a researchable problem within the gap and address the following:

- 1) the nature of that dimension e.g. LEP, inequitable access to knowledge, etc.;
- 2) how it contributes to the gap with data to support your case, e.g. performance of LEP students;
- 3) the policy debate surrounding it (what policies and practices have tried to help close this gap?);
- 4) a discussion of promising practices that might close this dimension of the gap with supporting evidence from research and evaluation studies.

See the rubric below for how I will be reviewing the paper and supporting tasks.

As you review extant literature, consider these questions (specifically for Task #2):

- What was the purpose of the study?
- What framework was used? Was this relevant to the study?
- Who were the subjects/participants studied? How many?
- What methods did the researcher(s) use to conduct the study?
- What did the researcher(s) find?
- What conclusion(s) did the researcher(s) draw?

I use this format to help you with your writing as you proceed toward your dissertation. So often the findings from studies are affected by the nature of the first four bullets above. I'm having you "track" these because they are essential to determining whether a study is worth citation in your work. I would like you to present your near-final proposals to your peers on **12/08/2016**.

Four Tasks

These four tasks are intended to encourage you to think about your perspective and skill as a researcher and for the purposes of this class, a policy analyst. The first two tasks build to the third one and should provide you with opportunities to engage with me in how to identify a problem, discern relevant and related research, and eventually practice crafting a research proposal that examines a specific policy issue.

Task #1–10%: For the first assignment, I would like you to give me a statement of the problem about which you want to know more. It must be a problem that focuses on the gap in any of its various forms. I don't expect you to break new ground, but do expect you to be grounded in extant literature. **Due October 13, 2016.**

Task #2–20%: For this second assignment, I would like an annotated bibliography of approximately 20 studies you are considering for your final paper. An annotated bibliography serves several purposes. It provides me insight to your thinking and allows me to potentially provide additional resources. It provides you a framework to examine the literature and parse out themes that may be prevalent to your topic of study. Please use the following format: Author (last name first). (date). Title. Publication information, e.g. journal with volume and number; or for a book location and publisher; or URL and date retrieved. Then include about five sentences characterizing the essence of the bibliographical reference. Refer to APA guidelines. **Due November 10, 2016.**

Task #3–50% You are to prepare a 15-20 page paper on one dimension of the achievement gap that is found in your own school or (if you're not working in a school) that is an area of interest for you. As noted above, this paper is to explore:

- 1) the nature of that dimension e.g. LEP, inequitable access to knowledge, etc.;
- 2) how it contributes to the gap with data to support your case, e.g. performance of LEP students;
- 3) the policy debate surrounding it (what policies and practices have tried to help close this gap?);
- 4) a discussion of promising practices that might close this dimension of the gap with supporting evidence from research and evaluation studies. **Due Dec. 8, 2016.**

Task #4- 10%. You are to present your gap study to the class. The purpose of this presentation is to provide your classmates an understanding of your work this semester on the gap. Your presentation can be creative, interactive (i.e. debate) or direct instruction; there are no stipulations on presentation mode; however, I do expect you to address the four-step outline provided in task #3. **Due Dec. 1 or Dec. 8, 2016 (you will be assigned a date).**

Classroom Participation -10% (See rubric at the end of this document). Attendance and participation are required to receive full credit.

All assignments must be completed in MSWord and submitted to BB in the assignments page. Paper must be formatted according to APA Publication Manual, 6th edition. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me. See *Assessment Rubrics* for more detail. However, in general the following outlines the expectations of your final paper.

Evaluation and Grading (see rubric at the end of this document)

3 = highly accomplished (letter grade = A). The paper clearly delineates the nature of the area that the literature suggests, “causes” the achievement gap. The discussion includes research studies in which the data clearly indicate the gap. The student also presents a deep discussion of the policies enacted that are intended to alter practice to close the gap, and lastly, there is a solid presentation and critique of the promising practices designed to close the gap and a judgment of their strengths and weaknesses.

2 = adequate (letter grade = B). The paper describes the nature of the area as a “cause.” The student includes a general and abstract discussion of the research literature to date and identifies some policies enacted to close the gap, and lastly there is some discussion of the promising practices that is more perspective than critique.

1= needs rewriting (letter grade = C). The literature and reads more like a “thought” paper than an analysis of the research literature, the policies enacted, and the effects of those promising practices to date.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of the course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for Pcs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player>
 - Apple QuickTime Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

CEHD Course Expectations

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

- **Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory, as the discussions that take place in this class are essential to achieving the course objectives.
- **Tardiness:** Prompt arrival for the beginning of class is expected.
- **Participation:** Each student is expected to complete all the assigned readings and participate in the discussions. It is expected that each student will be attuned to group dynamics in order to ensure the active participation of all in the class.
- **Absence:** If you must miss a class, you are responsible for notifying me (preferably in advance) and for completing any assignments, readings, etc. before the start of the next class.
- **Assignments:** All assignments must be completed in MSWord and sent to me as an attachment via email prior to class. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.
- **Dispositions:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/professional-disposition> for a listing of these dispositions. The

Virginia Department of Education and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education promote standards of professional competence and dispositions. Dispositions are values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and all members of the learning community. The Graduate School of Education expects students, faculty, and staff to exhibit professional dispositions through a:

Commitment to the profession

- Promoting exemplary practice
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Advancing the profession
- Engagement in partnerships

Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards

- Fairness
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Confidentiality
- Respect for colleagues and students

Commitment to key elements of professional practice

- Belief that all individuals have the potential for growth and learning
- Persistence in helping individuals succeed
- High standards
- Safe and supportive learning environments
- Systematic planning
- Intrinsic motivation
- Reciprocal, active learning
- Continuous, integrated assessment
- Critical thinking
- Thoughtful, responsive listening
- Active, supportive interactions
- Technology-supported learning
- Research-based practice
- Respect for diverse talents, abilities, and perspectives
- Authentic and relevant learning

Commitment to being a member of a learning community

- Professional dialogue
- Self-improvement
- Collective improvement
- Reflective practice

- Responsibility
- Flexibility
- Collaboration
- Continuous, lifelong learning

Commitment to democratic values and social justice

- Understanding systemic issues that prevent full participation
- Awareness of practices that sustain unequal treatment or unequal voice
- Advocate for practices that promote equity and access
- Respects the opinion and dignity of others
- Sensitive to community and cultural norms
- Appreciates and integrates multiple perspectives

Please note that:

o “Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.” (from Mason Honor Code online at <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>)

o Paraphrasing involves taking someone else’s ideas and putting them in your own words. When you paraphrase, you need to cite the source using APA format.

o When material is copied word for word from a source, it is a direct quotation. You must use quotation marks (or block indent the text) and cite the source.

o Electronic tools (e.g., SafeAssign) may be used to detect plagiarism if necessary.

o Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary actions.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU POLICIES RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- *Policies*
 - a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).

c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

d. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).

e. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- *Campus Resources*

a. Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.

b. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (see <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).

c. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (see <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).

d. The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE:

Tentative Schedule

September

- 1 **Introduction to the course: What is your understanding of the gap?
How is it defined? What is the data?** 1. h
1. Review the common core results, h
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011312.pdf> (Course content)
2. Explore the National Center for Education Statistics,
https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/gaps/understand_gaps.aspx
(web pages)
- a. From the NCES page, under “other studies” review the Black-White Gaps FAQ and Hispanic-White Gaps FAQ
3. Close up the review this evening with
<https://www.gse.upenn.edu/news/rethinking-achievement-gap>.
- 8 ***Brown: the great equalizer for Black-White disparities.***
In class: Braun, H., Chapman, L., Vezzu, S. (2010). “The Black-White achievement gap revisited”
- You will be assigned to read two-three of the following** (cooperative learning_jigsaw activity)
- Read Turner, K. M. (2003). “Getting it straight”(course content)
- Read Pratt, R. A. (1991). “A promise unfulfilled” (course content)
- Read Fultz, M. (2007). “The displacement of Black educator’s post-*Brown*” (course content)
- Read Fairclough, A. (2000). “Being in the field of education and also being a ...seems...tragic”
- Read Fairclough, A. (2004). “The costs of *Brown*”
- 15 **Might Teachers or pedagogy be the Answer?**
Teachers?
- Read “The Problem with Problem Teachers” (weblinks)
- Read Welsh (2009) on blackboard (course content: “Parents”)
- Read “Examining Teachers’ Beliefs...” (Course content)
- Read “Teacher Effects and the Achievement Gap” (course content)
- Read “Four Personae of Racism...” (Course content)
- Read Putnam, Hansen, Walsh, and Quintero (2016) “High hopes and harsh realities” (cc)
- 22 **Expectation gap?**
Read “Pygmalion Effect” (course content)
- Read “Expectations Gap” (weblink or course content)
- Read Blais, <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-30-fall-2006/ivory-tower-lessons-teacher> (weblink)
- Read “How Teachers and Schools Contribute to the Racial Differences in the Realization of Academic Potential” (on course content)

- 29 **Policy solutions: addressing the teachers.**
Read Patterson, J.A., Mickelson, K.A., Hester, M.L. & Wyrick, J. (2010). “Remembering teachers in a segregated school” (course content)
Read Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). “Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy” (course content)
Read TFA and Teachers’ Expectations on blackboard (course content)
Read “The Irreplaceables” (Course content)
Read “Opportunity at the Top...” (weblink)

October

- 6 **Race? Poverty? Yes? No?**
You will be assigned two – three of the following (jigsaw)
Read “The Income Gap” (course content)
Read “The Black-White Achievement Gap: When Progress Stopped” (cc)
Read “The Widening Achievement Gap between Rich and Poor” (cc)
Read “The Excellence Gap” (course content)
Read “Falling out of the lead” (course content)
Read: “Race for Results: (course content)
Read “Poverty and Education: The Way Forward” (course content)

- 13 **Assignment Due: *Description of your paper and abbreviated bibliography due. Upload on BB in assignments.***

- Structured Inequality? Structuring Equality?**
Read “Two Lives Diverged” on blackboard course content
Read “A Broader, Bolder Approach”
http://www.boldapproach.org/bold_approach_full_statement.pdf (weblink)
Read “Two Guys and a Dream” on blackboard (Course content)
Read “KIPP Middle Schools: Impact...” Executive Summary (Course content)

- 20 **What about the family? It’s the parents?**
Read Schechter and Sherri on blackboard (course content)
Read “The Parent Gap” (weblinks)
Read “Invisible Inequality” (course content)
Read “Parental Involvement, Cultural Capital and the Achievement Gap” (cc)
Read “Family and School Social Capital” (course content)
Read “Bronx Partnership...” (Course content)
Read New Hope Project
(<http://www.promisingpractices.net/program.asp?programid=269>)

- 27 **Thoughts on Overcoming Race and Poverty: Policies aimed towards family.**
Read “Reducing Stereotype Threat...” (Course content)
Read Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master on blackboard (cc))

Read “Poverty and Potential” (course content)
Read “Parenting Practices, Teenage Lifestyles...” (Course content)
Read “The Word Gap” (weblinks)
Read “Brookings: Improve Children’s Life Chances” (course content)

November

3

Maybe it’s the kids

Read “Dropping out of High School...” (Course content)
Read “Drop out indicators...” (Course content)
Read “Fordham and Ogbu” (course content)
Read “Early Warning Systems” fact sheet (course content)
Read “Upending Stereotypes” (course content)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H14bBuluwB8>

10 **Assignment Due: *Annotated Bibliography: Upload on BB in assignments***

New Structures

Read “Disrupting Injustice” (course content)
Read “Small Schools = Good Results” (course content)
Read Fryer “Learning from Charters” (course content)
Opportunity by Design... (course content)
NAACP report (course content)

17

Technology as a gap closer

Read “Disrupting Class” on blackboard (course content)
Read “Are Personalized Learning...” (course content)
Read “An Issue with Technology as a Disruption” (course content)
Read “School of One Research Report” (course content)
Read New Data: Bridging the Computer Science Access gap (Aug. 9, 2016). <http://changetheequation.org/blog/new-data-bridging-computer-science-access-gap-0>

24

Thanksgiving No Class, Enjoy!

December

1

Assignment due: *Individual presentations begin today.*

Failure is not an option

Read “Failure is not an option” (course content)
Read “Expanding Learning Enriching Learning” (course content)
Read “100% in Kansas” (weblink)

8

Assignment due: *Final Paper Due. Upload on BB in assignments*

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC(S):

Grading Criteria for Written Assignments

	Levels of Performance		
	Basic (C)	Proficient (B)	Distinguished (A)
Research problem/question.	The problem statement is a collection of global assertions and its significance is neither discussed nor related to the problem.	The problem is clearly stated, but the significance is neither discussed nor does it place the problem in the context of the literature.	The problem is clearly stated and its significance to the field is discussed in context to the field in both specific and general terms.
Literature review. This literature review will emphasize what policies and practices have tried to help close this gap.	The literature reads more like a “thought” paper than an analysis of the research literature. The literature review is vague with global citations that do not describe the studies with enough clarity for the reader to see the argument for the study. The scholarship descriptions do not build from one to the next.	The paper describes the nature of the area as a “cause.” The student includes a general and abstract discussion of the research literature to date. The literature review is “reportorial” i.e., a mechanical listing and description of each study, but unable to create a coherent “whole” that is tightly supportive of the problem/question.	The paper clearly delineates the nature of the area that the literature suggests, “causes” the achievement gap. The discussion includes research studies in which the data clearly indicate the gap. The literature review is well integrated. The logic within each set of studies is cogent, tight and the transitions from one set of studies to another are clearly drawn.
Policy recommendation.	The policies discussed are vaguely presented and lack clear connection to the policy dilemma. Insufficient evidence of understanding and application.	The student identifies some policies enacted to close the gap, and there is some discussion of the promising practices that is more perspective than critique.	The student presents a deep discussion of the policies enacted that are intended to alter practice to close the gap. A solid presentation and critique of the promising practices designed to close the gap and a judgment of their strengths and weaknesses.
Completeness of Work_APA requirements	Important elements missing or difficult to find. References are not correctly cited. APA is not adhered to.	Moderate shortcomings; minor elements missing that distract the instructor’s ability to see the product as a whole. Evidence of effort, but one or more significant points are missed or not addressed. Some references are missing or APA is not always adhered to.	100 % complete and error free. Accurate and seamless writing; virtually a complete product. Adheres to APA 6 th ed. All references are correctly cited.

Timeliness	Assignments excessively or repeatedly late.	Assignments late more than once without prior conversation with instructor. Not necessarily chronic.	100% on time. Almost always on time; rare but forgivable tardiness (such a serious or personal family illness). Instructor is notified in advance.
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Class Participation Reflection
(due last day of class)

Name: _____

Number of absences _____ Reason(s) _____

Number of tardies _____ Reason(s) _____

Based on the Class Participation Rubric and instructor expectations for participation, how many points (out of 10 possible) would you grant yourself for class participation and why?

How would you describe the quality and effort associated with your contributions to **in-class interactions and discussions**?

Class Participation Criteria

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaching Expectations	Below Expectations
Attendance	Exemplary attendance, no tardies.	Near perfect attendance, few tardies.	Occasional (1-3) absences or tardies.	Frequent (>3) absences or tardies.
Quality of Questions, Interaction	Most queries are specific and on point. Deeply involved in class dialogue. Challenges ideas, seeks meaning.	Often has specific queries, stays involved in class dialogue, though sometimes tentative or off base.	Asks questions about deadlines, procedures, and directions or for help with little specificity. Little discussion of ideas.	Rarely asks questions of any quality.
Effort	Willingly participates when asked. Plays a leadership role in groups. Engages and brings out the best in others.	Willingly participates when asked. Takes on group tasks. Engages others.	Reluctantly participates when asked. Seeks easiest duties in groups. Tolerates others.	Actively avoids involvement when possible. Complains about others. Has large set of excuses.
Engagement	Enthusiastically initiates discussion. Personalizes and takes ownership of activities. Always knows where class or group is.	Sometimes initiates discussion and always works well with direction. Generally knows what's going on.	Seeks direction, but does not initiate discussion. May know where class or group is.	Waits for direction. Knows little of what is going on. Cannot describe where class or group is.