

Course Syllabus



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Course Description This course explores historical and contemporary challenges involved in the policy and practice of viewing education more broadly than schooling alone. Students will explore several historical case studies, conceptual frames, and current policy challenges, culminating in a research project in service to the Norris Square community in Philadelphia.

Introduction

This course has a problem at its core. You are invited to work toward its resolution, and to produce useful guidance to others interested in it.

Our general problem will be the perceived underperformance of U.S. schools (or at least some subset of them), and more specifically, the manner in which policy makers and educators now seek to address it. Many viable solutions to this problem appear to share a premise, namely, the need to break away from the isolation of schooling from the wider set of variables affecting academic performance. To address underperformance in sustainable fashion, education must be "broadly understood," it would appear, amidst the variety of educating agencies within any community.

Yet to consider education in its wider context raises as many questions as answers, and surfaces considerable issues of principle, practice and policy. Participants in this course will explore both historical and current challenges involved in such a reframing of policy and practice, including through a close look at how broader factors play out in one specific community in Philadelphia.

Historian Lawrence Cremin wrote some of the key works in the history of education last century, and he defined education broadly, as "the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit, evoke, or acquire knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, or sensibilities, as well as any learning that results from the effort, direct or indirect, intended or unintended."^[i]

This broad sweep included a wide configuration of educating entities, i.e., not only schools and colleges, but also YMCA's, mechanics institutes, families, religious organizations, news media, family, technology, and so on. We must, urged Cremin, think *comprehensively, relationally* and *publicly* about education; he argued that any "theory of education becomes the theory of the relation of various educative interactions and institutions to one another and to the society at large."^[ii] To talk about educational policy and practice in this way, "education in the broadest sense" as Dewey put it, means engaging all the various means by which we as a people educate ourselves, toward both our private and public purposes.

Should we approach education in this way? What would it look like to take such a premise seriously? How would this approach affect how we understand and address our current educational challenges in the U.S.? How would we make sense of this messy mix, and which disciplines and/or professions would provide the most powerful lenses and analytic tools? Who has tried such an approach, and who is attempting to do this today in practice? What are the implications for U.S. education policy and professional practice, including schools?

Engaging in a seminar approach, after an initial survey of current policy, we will explore these and related questions historically, reflecting on prior eras and tapping two case studies. We will also engage these questions as they play out in practice today, exploring conceptual frameworks and tools across several disciplines and professions. We will examine a selection of current initiatives, in the U.S. and overseas, likely including "community schools," integrated services, "place-based" efforts, *consejos de participación social*, children's zones and more.

In order to apply, extend and test our understanding throughout the course, we will work with a particular community, the Norris Square/West Kensington area* in north Philadelphia. We will try to understand the complexity of factors affecting the educational outcomes there. This will provide participants in this seminar an opportunity to contribute toward a greater understanding of the factors at play, the chance to discipline our thinking with the challenges of reality, and we hope, to provide useful, actionable information to stakeholders in the Norris Square/Kensington community.

Course Organization

The organization of the course sessions -- topics, readings, assignments, etc. -- is visible via the [Modules tab on the left](https://penngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/modules) (<https://penngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/modules>). This may provide the clearest overview of the course organization, though a calendar of deadlines is also provided below and in the calendar view.

The course will begin with several sessions that focus on locating schooling within the broader educational landscape, both in terms of current policy/practice and historically, including a case study from West Virginia in the 1910's, East Harlem in the 1930's, and later, Chicago in the present. We will explore some analytical lenses into the school-community relationship.

In subsequent sessions, we will explore several disciplinary and professional constructs we hope will help us make sense of the complexity of factors in the broader educational ecology, turning to constructs drawn from the literature on social capital, trust, civic capacity, community organizing and media ecology. As we look to operate out of a more comprehensive, synthetic approach to education, what can we draw upon from a variety of fields? What conceptual insights may assist educators?

We will then turn to several core challenges across these approaches: modeling the broader ecology, governing collaboratively, and gauging outcomes and accountability. Along

the way, we will examine and critique several contemporary cases, including overseas, in which broader educational strategies are being pursued.

The [schedule of classes](#) for the term is posted on the course site, and includes required and supplemental readings (so far). Please note that some details of this schedule may change, and some sessions will be held off campus. Notice will be provided and the course site will have the latest versions. Our sessions generally will be held **5-7pm on Tuesdays**.

Assignments

Required and supplemental readings are posted on the course site. The following books will also be required:

- Johaneck, Michael C., and John L. Puckett. *Leonard Covello and the Making of Benjamin Franklin High School : Education as If Citizenship Mattered*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2007.
- Katz, Michael B. *Improving Poor People : The Welfare State, the "Underclass," and Urban Schools as History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Orr, Marion, and John Rogers. *Public Engagement for Public Education*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

Prior to each class session, starting with the second session, by *no later than noon Monday* please post a *brief* (max = 2 page, single-spaced) reflection on the week's readings. An effort has been made to limit the required readings, so that you will have the opportunity to engage with them in meaningful ways. Please post these reflection pieces online via the discussion prompt for that week. Please then take a look at the collected responses prior to class, so that we can jump right into the discussion.

Occasionally, we will "jigsaw" the readings, dividing them up across the class, so that we can all benefit from a larger set of readings than each of us might reasonably handle in a week. All readings should be available on the course site. Supplemental readings are also indicated on the readings list, for further extension. I invite you to recommend works to the seminar that you feel would provide useful supplemental reading.

In your *pre-session reflections*, you should assume that everyone is completely familiar with the readings; do not take time or space to re-hash the arguments. This is your opportunity to play with the more interesting ideas, push our thinking in new directions, offer fresh insights, link to other readings, critique premises or logic, etc. Please help us all think in more productive and interesting ways as a result of your comments. We will tap these reflections at the start of the Tuesday class sessions. Please be prepared to present and discuss your thoughts in class.

Our first two sessions will be held in our designated classroom, but our third session will be held at the Norris Square/West Kensington neighborhood, likely at the Norris Square Civic Association (<http://nscaonline.org/>). We will hold other sessions offsite in the community as well, likely on October 15th and again on December 3rd, in order to inform our inquiry with direct field input. Readings will be assigned as well for those sessions, with pre-session reflections required noon that Monday. For offsite sessions, we will report directly to the offsite location, available through the link above.

During each class session, your participation is critical to the work we hope to accomplish in this course. Please be well-prepared in the readings, formulate questions and concerns in advance, and be ready to engage actively in discussions and other activities during class.

Across the term, you will be designing a research project related to the course. If you continue this or a related course in the Spring, you will be asked to carry out this research project fully. In the design of the project, you will be collecting some initial field data and indicating some initial findings during the Fall term.

In order for your research effort to serve the community's interests, we ask that your question provide useful and original input into the work of stakeholders in the Norris Square community. We will be assisted by the Norris Square Civic Association, a 30-year-old local organization, in vetting our research agenda. We ask that your research advance our collective ability to answer questions of significance to community stakeholders. Further direction on these questions will be provided early in the course.

You will share with the class a brief abstract of your intended research project early in the term, per the date on the course site. We will provide the opportunity for you to vet your research effort with Norris Square community stakeholders in some way. You will also have the opportunity to share your completed research design with them, including any preliminary findings, as well as with your classmates, at the end of the term. If you choose to implement fully this research project next term, the full findings would be shared publicly, starting with the community stakeholders involved most directly in this effort.

Based on discussions in advance of this course, you are also welcome to attend Norris Square community events that may assist in you understanding the school community, its context, etc., as well as serve as opportunities for data collection.

Your final research paper should be posted electronically no later than 5pm on Tuesday, December 17th.

Grading

Course grades will assess holistically the student's performance in the course, with greatest weighting to the final assignment, pre-session reflections and class participation. In approximate terms, the final assignment will represent 50%, pre-session reflections and in-class participation 50%. Per the guidance of the Penn GSE faculty, the notional mean of most courses is a B+.

Academic Integrity

As a community of learners, respect for the norms of honest intellectual exchange is fundamental to our collective and individual success. These norms allow us to create a space for sharing and developing ideas that is all too rare; we should be diligent in protecting it. All relevant University policies regarding Academic Integrity are to be strictly followed. Please consult the Student Handbook or the following web page for details on expected student conduct: <http://www.college.upenn.edu/responsibilities/integrity.html> (<http://www.college.upenn.edu/responsibilities/integrity.html>)

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will be dealt with according to University policy (including failing the course and/or notification on permanent record/transcript and/or expulsion from the program). Please read the Code of Academic Integrity in the GSE handbook. Writings and references will be randomly checked.

Academic Support

All students are encouraged to use the academic supports offered at GSE and Penn. See <http://www.gse.upenn.edu/node/103> (<http://www.gse.upenn.edu/node/103>) for further information.

Accommodations

Students requiring disability accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act should contact the Office of Disability Services (215-573-9235) for information and at the very beginning of the semester. The Office of Disability Services will work directly with the professor regarding appropriate accommodations.

If the University is open, class will be held unless otherwise notified by the professor (via student's emails). On days with inclement weather, please verify whether Penn is holding classes by calling 215-898-MELT at any time to see if the University is open. Please call in the afternoon if the class is in afternoon or evening as the University announces evening closings later in the day. If the professor cancels class, you will be notified by email.

A Cautionary Note

This course will require participants to read from varied fields that inform our inquiry, and we will attempt to follow the work that most informs our underlying questions. Participants should be willing to wrestle with types of readings, both current and historical, with which they may or may not be comfortable, and which will stretch all seminar members beyond the borders of whatever sub-field has become of greatest familiarity. I hope this presents an exciting opportunity, but those taking the course should be aware of this characteristic. Our ability to assess critically a variety of materials will be at a premium.

Instructor

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Office Hours by Appointment

Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding the course. As I am often out of my office, the best way to reach me is via email *on this site* or via my cell phone.

[i] Cremin, Lawrence A. *American Education, the National Experience, 1783-1876*. New York: Harper and Row, 1980: ix.

[ii] Cremin, Lawrence A. "Public Education and the Education of the Public." *Teachers College Record* 77, no. 1 (1975): 1-12.

* For the purposes of this course, the Norris Square/West Kensington neighborhood will be defined roughly by the following four census tracts: 163, 162, 156, 157.

Date	Day	Details	
Sep 3	Tue	First Session (https://pennngse.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=991199&include_contexts=course_1095042#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31303935303432227d)	5pm to 7pm
		Due: Required Readings - Session 1 (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3434755)	due by 11:59pm
Sep 9	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - What is our problem? (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3435542)	due by 11:59am
Sep 10	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Session 2 (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3434759)	due by 11:59pm
Sep 16	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Locating Schools in US Education: Norris Square as Case Study (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439235)	due by 11:59am
Sep 17	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Locating Schools in US Education: Norris Square as Case Study (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383660)	due by 12pm
		Offsite Session - Norris Square (https://pennngse.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=1008371&include_contexts=course_1095042#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31303935303432227d)	5pm to 7pm
Sep 23	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - School/Community, Development, Place and Neighborhoods (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439911)	due by 11:59am
Sep 24	Tue	Due: Required Readings - School/Community, Development, Place and Neighborhoods (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383661)	due by 12pm

Sep 30	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Counts (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3433420)	due by 11:59am
Oct 1	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Counts (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3442347)	due by 11:59pm
Oct 7	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Hanifan, social capital, trust (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439972)	due by 11:59am
Oct 8	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Hanifan, social capital, trust (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383662)	due by 12pm
Oct 14	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Community Organizing (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439981)	due by 11:59am
		Due: Prelim Research Project Summary (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383687)	due by 11:59am
Oct 15	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Community Organizing (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383665)	due by 12pm
		Offsite Session - Norris Square (https://pennngse.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=1008370&include_contexts=course_1095042#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31303935303432227d)	5pm to 7pm
Oct 21	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Community-centered schooling, public engagement (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439977)	due by 11:59am
Oct 22	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Community-centered schooling, public engagement (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383663)	due by 12pm
Oct 28	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Civic Capacity, Civil Religion, Choice (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439991)	due by 11:59am
Oct 29	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Civic Capacity, Civil Religion, Choice (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383664)	due by 12pm
Nov 4	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Chicago School Reform (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3439999)	due by 11:59am
Nov 5	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Chicago School Reform (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383682)	due by 11:59pm
Nov 11	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Collaborative Governance and Accountability (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3440005)	due by 11:59am
Nov 12	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Core Challenge: Collaborative Governance and Accountability (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383685)	due by 11:59pm
Nov 18	Mon	Due: Pre-Session Reflection on Readings - Econometrics, Measuring Success (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3440085)	due by 11:59am
Nov 19	Tue	Due: Required Readings - Econometrics, Measuring Success (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383668)	due by 12pm
Nov 26	Tue	No Class - Happy Thanksgiving! (https://pennngse.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=1008368&include_contexts=course_1095042#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31303935303432227d)	12am
Dec 2	Mon	Due: Presentation to Community Stakeholders Panel (https://pennngse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383684)	due by 11:59am
Dec 3	Tue	Offsite Session -- Presentation to Norris Square community (https://pennngse.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=1008369&include_contexts=course_1095042#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31303935303432227d)	5pm to 7pm

Dec 10	Tue	Due: Draft Questions, Concerns (https://pennqse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3447140)	due by 5pm
Dec 17	Tue	Due: First Term Final Research Paper (https://pennqse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383670)	due by 5pm
	Other	Due: Optional Readings - Networking, Internet, cyber public square (https://pennqse.instructure.com/courses/1095042/assignments/3383666)	
