Education and Equality: Comparing the US, Asia, & Europe

For a half-century, globalization has tested Americans’ faith in the American dream that all could have educational opportunity which opened the way for a good job. Compared to other advanced countries, US high school and college dropout rates are high and US mobility rates dropping. For many, public education is the culprit, responsible for broken promises and declining economic competitiveness.

In its landmark report, A Nation at Risk, President Reagan’s Department of Education called declining US average scores on international math and science tests a national threat. Subsequent administrations questioned whether US schools are able to produce “world-class” students like those in Asia and Europe. Under No Child Left Behind, President George W Bush tried to remake US education through a new core curriculum and high-stakes testing.

These reforms have not rescued many failing American schools. Years of research have shown that school success is tied to family income. The enormous income and achievement gaps between top and bottom American scores are a sign of shame in a democratic society that promises open access and equal opportunity for a diverse population.

Actors on the left and on the right want to transform schools to better serve the dual goals of excellence and equality, but few agree on what should or can be done.

This course is investigates what has been done and with what results. The goal is to gain leverage on the history of US public education and possibilities for educational change through thoughtful comparisons of schooling in the Asia (especially Japan), and Europe (especially Germany and Finland). Its core questions are:

- What are the purposes of public education in the US and other countries? How is public education impacted by structures of national/local governance, by inequalities of class, race, and gender, and by informal schooling?
- What is educational equity? **
- http://educationnorthwest.org/equity-program/educational
- Are all school systems tracked? Does tracking increase or decrease educational inequalities?
- How does testing — for entrance, for monitoring student performance or for graduation — impact educational inequalities? How does testing shape what is taught in schools (curriculum)?
- How much does student success depend on good teaching relative to other factors in schooling? How might good teaching be measured or judged?
- How have nations reformed their educational systems? How did the US Occupation change public education in Japan? How did Singapore and Finland race to the top in math?
- What kinds of reform might best serve Americans for the goal of educational equality? Focusing on high schools, why is it hard to change educational outcomes?

These questions inform the final project which uses your knowledge of schools in the US, Asia, and Europe to evaluate proposals for Portland high school reform.
Designed for those interested in teaching, social sciences, public policy, and international studies, the course can fulfill requirements for writing-intensive courses and the International Studies program.

Course Goals

1. To develop sociological understanding through comparative analysis
How and why do the patterns of educational outcomes differ among advanced nations? How are these patterns linked to social differences (gender, race, class, language) and the organization of schooling (testing, tracking, teaching). Comparative analysis enables sociologists to address such questions through the study of similarities and differences in the origins, dynamics, and consequences of these patterns.

2. To judge calls to change American schooling by copying other countries
Comparing other societies with your own helps understand what we could and should borrow from abroad. Sociologists study other countries to learn how different social patterns took hold in different times and places. Many Americans think that parts of Asian and European schools are worth copying. But should and can we copy them? Japan and Germany are good comparisons because after WW II the American Occupation tried to reorganize their schools with mixed results.

3. To use sociological thinking to be better critics and citizens, parents and teachers
We focus on schools because they are institutions in which all of us have personal experience and hold a stake as students, workers, taxpayers, voters, and volunteers. Drawing questions from experience and observation is at the heart of sociological thinking.

Sociological thinking involves thoughtful comparison, interpretation, and explanation. For comparison, the course relies on case studies and graphs like college completion rates by family income. The statistical content is minimal and presumes nothing more than knowledge of algebra. For interpretation and explanation, it introduces the use of theoretical constructs and social research strategies, especially external validity, the question of whether one can reliably generalize from what’s been observed. Rather than certifying you as a sociologist, it gives you a sociological perspective on the workings of schools which shape the lifetimes of most Americans.

Learning Outcomes

"Comparative sociology is not a particular branch of sociology; it is sociology itself, insofar as it ceases to be purely descriptive and aspires to account for facts."  Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*

1. To understand sociological thinking and how to use it to analyze social systems and processes
2. To understand comparative analysis and use it to study education and stratification in the US and other nations
3. To judge what might be borrowed from abroad for the goal of changing educational outcomes in the US
4. To recognize how public education is historically constructed and "locked in" in ways that make change difficult

UG Requirements

Three (3) take-home essays & team presentation (85%) 1st writing exercise attached

1. January 24: Meritocracy and equality in US and Japan (25%) 3-4 pages, single-spaced
2. February 14: What should/could the US borrow from Japan & Finland to improve educational outcomes? (25%) 4-6 pages, single-spaced
3. March 14: Final team presentation on Portland high school redesign (5%)
4. March 19: Assessing PPS High School Redesign (30%) 7-9 pages single-spaced
   Attendance, Presentations, Quizzes, & In-class Assignments (15%)

Course grade is a weighted average of scores on written work, team presentations, and class participation. There is no research requirement. The writing exercises draw on your understanding of the two books, coursepack, lectures, films, and discussions. All who attend regularly, do the reading thoroughly, and complete all parts of the take-home essays and presentation should score an A or B. The best way to boost your score is to work with the WIC assistant on your drafts. Improved writing through drafts and revisions can add 1-10% to total points. Extra credit can be arranged if it benefits the course.

Grad Requirements
Graduate credit requires completion of 3 assigned paper plus 1) in-class presentation based on outside readings (suggestions on last page) and online research, 2) helping design and mentor PPS high school redesign exercise

Class meetings
Because a two-hour lecture is too much, each class mixes lecture, films, discussion, and writing exercises. For discussions and exercises to work, your careful preparation is crucial. Regular reading and on-time attendance are required. Be sure to download readings for each week. If you can’t read all readings in advance, skim before class. If you know at the start that you’ll miss more than three classes in the term, you should not register. In place of reading, you’ll watch some short films at home.

Why do in-class discussions (student comment)
Another thing that I think would make the course more effective would be to include more small group discussions -- it helps to eliminate the issue of people dominating class discussions and gives the shy folks a chance to feel comfortable speaking about their ideas. One way that I’ve seen this done in other classes is to give each group a big piece of paper and some markers, tell ’em to brainstorm their ideas and then report them back to the class. This would also give students the opportunity to connect information to their experiences, and to also share their experiences with students who might have had completely different experiences.

How to do readings
It took awhile to get the hang of the readings and to know that not every sentence needed to be read to do well in the class. Overall, for a 400 level class I think the reading load was about right.

Help with writing
The benefit of a WIC (writing intensive) course is feedback on drafts; your grade won’t depend on one-night papers or in-class exams. It’s not more writing; it’s more attention to re-writing.
I liked that how the papers were spaced throughout the course. The first and second papers should remain separate and I found it helpful to have rough drafts due. As someone who is a chronic procrastinator, the mandatory drafts improved the quality of my finals. This certainly gives us the opportunity to. I can’t say that I took enough advantage of this but the flow of the class directed us to largely focus on the right material.

One requirement of the course is to learn to use social science citation style to record sources and list references (e.g. Rohlen, 33; lecture 10/24; NY Times, 6/3/07). So no footnotes!

Be sure to use a header/footer with your name and page number on every page

The course uses D2L for discussions, downloads of readings, and short "hands-on" exercises. Doing online work allows us to use time in class more fully.
What matters to us as instructors

1. **Attendance, participation, and preparation.** Please remember that readings must be read in advance for discussions to succeed. Because many of you can’t make office hours, I will post a weekly heads-up e-mail to which you can reply if you have questions.

2. **Dialogue.** Quiet and respect for other’s views so we can listen to each other.

3. **Support.** We’ll make 3-4 person teams to do the final exercise and become study/support groups for you. Teamwork means sharing responsibility for learning. Bring an extra copy of your downloads. Share notes. Work jointly on presentations and drafts to help all succeed.

4. **Feedback.** We exchange drafts in class and give comments on your writing and how to improve it. Stephanie is ready to help you draft the writing exercises. Please e-mail questions to him or set a time to talk things over.

5. **Progress.** Improved writing will boost your grade. We will give prep and handback sheets for essays. Stronger thinking and writing is the point of the course.

6. **On-time arrival in class and for papers.** Late papers will be penalized one grade interval per day. Crises and illnesses (yours or others) and job crunches are legitimate reasons for an extension. Notify Stephanie or me of problems by e-mail on or before the due date so a new deadline can be set. **Come to class on time** so others learning is not disturbed.

**Readings**

1. **Books** (at PSU Bookstore)

2. **Coursepack** for classwork at Smart Copy, 6th and Hall (Lettered A – H)

3. **Copyrighted readings** are on D2L

4. **Hyperlinks** are included in the calendar below – Be sure to have the syllabus on your hard drive so you have live links. (Marked LINK)

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**Calendar**  
**Soc 452/552 W13**

- Prepare readings and writing exercises for dates bolded
- Be sure to bring coursepack to every class
- Some materials only available on D2L or the web
- Dates and topics may change for illness, weather, or workflow
- The length of assigned readings varies. You should plan your time to stay on top of them.

*Readings from the coursepack are lettered and numbered (A1, A2 … H16)*  
*Abbreviations: D2L LINK = online readings.*  
⇒ Take action
PART I: MERITOCRACY VS EQUALITY IN THE US, JAPAN, AND EUROPE

1. Define: What is a meritocracy? (see JHS 135) Distinguish meritocracy, equality, and equity. Which -- the US or Japan -- is closer to a meritocratic society in your view? Why?
2. To improve educational outcomes, should the US copy Japanese school practices like a national standardized curriculum and admission to high school by exams? Educational outcomes include graduation rates, scores on tests, college entrance and completion rates.
3. What practices improve educational outcomes might be copied from Finland and other countries?
4. If the US did copy these practices, would the transformed school organization have educational outcomes like Japan has? [Note the Bowles & Gintis’ reading uses a similar hypothetical question to evaluate meritocracy in the US]

Week 1

Jan 8 Tuesday (1) – Comparative Sociology of Education: Meritocracy, equality, & equity
Lecture notes B1 in coursepack
1. Introduction: comparative sociology, sociology of education & inequality
2. Tension between meritocracy and equality in modern democratic societies
3. What do schools do? Understanding socialization, allocation, and legitimation
4. Linking legitimation and cultural capital (habitus & cultural capital defined TDG 31)

Exercise:
Watch Schools of Thought: Teaching Children in US & Japan (55 min) LA217.2 .S378 1994 VIDEO & complete feedback sheet To assess schools, an OPB Film crew visits Portland’s sister city Shinzouko, Japan and a Shinzouko crew visits Portland. What do they see?

Convergence or Divergence in Education?
Thomas Friedman (“Worried About India's and China's Booms?”) writes:
“My guess is that we’re at the start of a global convergence in education: China and India will try to inspire more creativity in their students. America will get more rigorous in math and science. And this convergence will be a great spur to global growth and innovation. It's a win-win. But some will win more than others—and it will be those who get this balance right the fastest, in the most schools.”
After seeing the film, do you agree?
http://select.nytimes.com/2006/03/24/opinion/24friedman.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=%22worried%20about%20India%22&st=cse
What do we mean by creativity? How are we shaped by what is taught at school?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U&feature=related

Online Assignment #1
Log into D2L and browse. Download required readings for 1/8
D2L AO Scott, “Destined for Failure.” NYT Magazine 2/9/03
“Education is imagined to be the great equalizer, the engine of social mobility and the solvent of class division -- even as the schools, public as well as private, maintain and engineer enormous inequities.”
D2L W Kirn, “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Aptitude” on Sonya Sotomayor NYT Magazine, 7/5/09
PPS High School Redesign, The superintendent’s original proposal at a glance - April 26, 2010
http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/high-school-system/3527.htm

Jan 10 Thursday(2)
⇒ For Thursday, be sure to buy & bring coursepack to class
⇒ Print from D2L (Scott, Kirn)
1. Review course packet: Scan study questions, sample essays, Soc Sci Citation Style
2. Contrast meritocracy & equality - JHS 135 & Tearing Down the Gates (TDG) 1-8, 29-33
4. Compare 5 Japanese high schools (JHS, ch 1)
5. Plans for PPS High School Redesign

Readings
1. Rohlen, Japan’s High Schools (JHS) intro, ch 1 & Table 6 (p130)
2. Tearing Down the Gates (TDG) pp1-8, 24-33 on cultural capital (defined 29)
3. PPS High School Redesign, Superintendent’s original proposal at a glance April 26, 2010 http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/high-school-system/3527.htm
4. H1 PPS Resolution 4236: High School Redesign Recitals pp1-6
5. B8 Athen O’Shea, What is cultural capital & habitus

Exercises
→ Discuss H4 Statistical Profiles PPS High Schools What data might be added to the profile?
→ Scan wrx1 1st writing exercise Meritocracy & equality in US & Japanese education
→ Scan sample essays for organizations & social science citation style
At home View Common Schools – Hope to see short film clip in class*

Online Assignment #2
Access the discussion board in D2L where you'll see our first topic asking you how to compare meritocracy and equality in the US and Japan. Respond briefly. You'll learn by reading what others post and they'll learn from you.

Jan 15 Tuesday(3) – Reproduction of inequality: tracking, class, & cultural capital
→ Print LeTendre* from D2L & skim then read selected pages to complete worksheet D1
→ D1c Tracking Autobiography – Bring to class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meritocracy</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>In modern societies, education matters most to where people land in the social class hierarchy. In principle, a meritocratic system offers a chance to rise to one’s potential. Equal opportunity is the watchword of American schooling. Sociology asks whether demographic antecedents, the structure of schooling, or what combination of them matters more in determining educational outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<th>Equality v Equity</th>
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<tr>
<td>There is general agreement that the aim of public policy cannot and should not be equality in the sense that everyone is the same or achieves the same outcomes – a state that appears to be both impossible and undesirable. Rather, a commitment to equity suggests that differences in outcomes should not be attributable to differences in areas such as wealth, income, power or possessions. The question is always a practical one, then, of what state or degree of inequality is acceptable. Ben Levin, Approaches to Equity in Policy for Lifelong Learning (OECD 2003)</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Lecture notes B2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL nations track students but differ in who, when, how, … Are US schools for sorting or leveling? Schools are “imagined to be the great equalizer, the engine of social mobility and the solvent of class division” (AO Scott, above), but do they really work that way? Thomas Jefferson acknowledged a natural aristocracy of talent, meaning some have it and others don’t. What lies behind Americans’ acceptance of tracking?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Belief in talent makes ability-grouping acceptable
2. Lareau (Unequal Childhoods) links differences in child-raising to differences in parents’ educational background & the cultural capital they possess and share with their children
3. Local variations mask the machinery of tracking—schools start subjects at different ages

How tracking reproduces inequality
1. Labeling stars and losers - students internalize labels – self-fulfilling prophecy
2. Once a student is tracked, course choices are constrained [in many high schools, ESL cohort all take same schedule]
3. Tracking “marks” a student in a way more powerful than giving a grade – kept from staying on task for grade level – cumulative disadvantage at Grade 9 & Grade 12

Readings
1. LeTendre - Read pp 43-89, skimming Methods (46) & Historical Antecedents (55) REV
2. JHS ch 4 Social Ecology of High Schools (skim for today’s lecture & read for Thursday)
3. D2: Bowles & Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America Revisited (2 pp summary) ADD

Exercises
D1 Tracking Autobiography – Bring to class
D3: Bowles and Gintis - Quote - non-cognitive traits count
D4: AFT - Qualities that count for employers
D5 Bowles & Gintis - Graphing meritocracy

Recommended
Jeannie Oakes, Classroom Social Relationships: Exploring The Bowles And Gintis Hypothesis, Soc of Ed, 1982   D2L

January 17 Thursday(4) - Tracking in US & Japan
-> Bring 2 copies of rough draft wrx1 Parts A&B Meritocracy & equality US & Japan
Decide and deliver the part you want Stephanie to read
-> Print D2L Lost in the Middle, Side by Side in Santa Paula, & Albert Shanker – favoring mixed classes & against curricular tracking*

Lecture notes B3
• How Japan and US differ in when & how they track students
• What are the effects of tracking on ed inequality? (TDG 101 Adam Gamoran)
• What is detracking? (read Santa Paula) What happens to the distribution of student scores when schools detrack?
• What is social promotion? Why do US schools not hold back students who are not up to grade level? [a stigma for students, a trigger for parent pushback, a show of failure for teachers and schools] Was social promotion practiced in schools you attended?
• Refusing social promotion: Oregon CIM (Certificate of Initial Mastery) and Ohio
• Why is it rare in US to have exit exams assuring that students who earn degrees know curriculum?

Readings
1. JHS ch 4 Social Ecology of High Schools (Read entire)
2. E8 Liebman, What can we learn from Japanese education? 550 - 552
3. D2L Romesh Ratnesar, Lost in the Middle
4. D2L James Willwerth, Side by Side in Santa Paula
5. D2L Shankar on favoring mixed classes & curricular tracking
7. D2L Cost of Social Promotion
8. LINK Ohio requires Grade 3 reading competence for advancement http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/education/jan-june13/reading_01-04.html
Recommended
Oregon's Certificate of Initial Mastery, in Betty Wallace & Bill Graves, Poisoned Apple LINK Tracking in Beaverton, pp 268 – 280
Who gets into TAG ?

Exercise
Complete exercise D1: What schools did you attend? Were you tracked? When? How?
See D6 Gabrielle's writeup of her D1 worksheet

January 22 Tuesday(5) – History of schools, especially high schools, in Germany, Japan, & US
Lecture Notes B4
Germany – What is the Prussian model of education? How did it start?
US – During 18th, 19th, & 20th centuries, which groups attended high school & for what purposes?
Japan - How did the American Occupation after WWII succeed & fail in changing public education?

Reading
JHS, chapter 2 (History) 45-76
F2 Pathways for Japanese students
Thom Hartmann, "Real School is Not Free" (from the left)
[Hartmann is wrong about timing of Horace Mann’s call for compulsory schooling]
Sheldon Richman, Horrors! Maybe the Schools are Working Just Fine (from the right)
http://fff.org/explore-freedom/article/horrors-schools-working-fine/

Exercises
Discuss rough drafts
Watch As American as Public School 1900-1950

January 24 Thursday(6) – Studying schools as organizations
DUE Final draft 1st writing exercise: Meritocracy & equality in US & Japan

Lecture Notes B3 Outcomes of schooling
Linking US - Japan differences in funding, class size, teaching style, and tracking to outcomes on international tests, high school graduation rates, & college attendance and completion
1. How do differences in the use of space and time explain differences in how students experience high school in the US & Japan?
2. What cultural attitudes shape the way time and space are used in Japanese high schools?
3. What cultural values do Japanese high schools instill? How do factors such as homeroom, clubs, and faculty relations contribute to the socialization of Japanese high school students?

Reading
1. JHS, Intro, pp3-5, ch 5 Space & Time, 145-169 & ch 6 Organization, 170-209
2. E3 Lake Oswego parents’ preferences for small classes

Exercises
E1 Compare Time by Subject when you went to high school
E2 Analyze Lake Oswego Jr High staff directory: How many teachers? How many non-teachers?
How many teachers of basic subjects? Of electives? Of skills & technology?
What proportions would you expect to find in a Japanese middle school?
Watch selections *Equality: As American as Public School 1950-1970s* & feedback sheet C1

**January 29 Tuesday(7) – Teaching: US, Japan, Finland, & Singapore:**
Whole class vs. individualized instruction of math
→ Print From D2L readings 1 – 6 below

**Lecture notes B9**
1. Contrast math teaching in US & Japan: whole class vs ability groups (tracking)
2. KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) schools turnaround formula: extended hours, young teachers, discipline & character-building with heavy doses of reading & math
3. Take note of Singapore’s commitment to excellence and equity, having shown in TIMSS 2003 and 2007 a relatively smaller performance gap than the United States among students from differing socioeconomic backgrounds
   TIMSS, formerly Third International Test in Mathematics & Sciences, now stands for Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study which tests students in grades 4, 8, and 12
   PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) tests 35 nations. In 2003, of the 35 nations in this study of fourth graders, eight scored higher than the United States, but only three of those scored statistically significantly higher. The average U.S. score of 543 floated well above the international average of 500 although somewhat behind the leading nation, Sweden, at 562.
4. In each of the last three cycles of the PISA exam (2003, 2006, and 2009), Finnish scored at or near the top of the international rankings in reading, math, and science. Why? Finland’s teachers are top tier: under 7 percent of those who apply to teacher education programs are accepted

**Readings**
1. D2L Becker How math teaching in Japan differs from the US
2. D2L Outliers – Math teaching in KIPP schools pp 250-269, especially 261-263
3. D2L Singapore Math: Beyond Textbooks
4. LINK How Finland jumped ahead in international math tests in 10 principles
5. D2L Finland, the real story – challenges Bert Maes 10 principles
6. Choose teachers from top 1/3 of the class – Finland, Singapore, S Korea
7. Oregon educators respond
8. Oregon receives C- on Education Week’s 2011 Quality Counts report

**Exercises**
If time, watch *Equality: As American as Public School 1950-1970s Part 3* & do feedback sheet C1

**January 31 Thursday(8) Testing & review what didn’t cover Jan 29**
→ Print D2L Test Mess
Lecture notes B5

**Readings**
1. D2L Traub, Test Mess
2. BBC, Getting ‘Gaokao fever’ - are these the world's toughest exams?
   [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/20045274](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/20045274)
For more on Gaokao, see
Buying your way to school success in China
On China, see

Exercises
1. Class begins with Tokyo U entrance exam for science D8
2. Return wrx1 (Meritocracy, equality, and tracking) & handback
3. Scan wrx2 guidelines What should/could the US borrow from Japan & Finland to improve educational outcomes? (25%) 4-6 pages, single-spaced
For wrx2 Part A, scan PPS school outcomes: graduation rates, achievement gap in High School
Redesign reports

February 5 Tuesday (9)  How US & Japanese parents shape school outcomes
→ Collect wrx1 revisions
Lecture notes B6 & B9 Japan/Singapore/Finland Race to the Top in Math

Readings
1. JHS, ch 3, especially 101-107 on juku
2. G1 Stevenson, Making the Grade (US, Chinese, Jpn parents)
3. D2L Praise child's effort, not intelligence
4. D2L Fukuzawa & LeTendre, Home Support & Kyoiku Mama
5. US penalizes single mothers
http://familyinequality.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/poverty-single-mothers-and-mobility/

Recommended:
1. Nancy Russell How juku generates inequality D2L
Japan 6.5M students $12B p174
2. Private tutoring grows in US as parents try to beat competition
3. How to design fair & effective tests – Susan Engel
Letters (Cook, Meisels, Wohlleb)

February 7 Thursday(10)  – US School Reform: A Nation at Risk & After
→ Bring 2 copies of wrx2 draft (What should and could the US borrow from Japan and Finland?)
Lecture notes B7
Reading
*JHS, conclusion
Even factoring out SES, race persists
Grad presentations: Diane Ravitch, Life and Death or Joseph Tobin

Exercise
Watch: Schools Part IV 1980-2000s
US Spending on Public Education
http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/united_states_total_spending_pie_chart
February 12 Tuesday (11) Summary: Why societies get the schools they deserve
Speakers: Oregon SOS (Save our Schools)

Reading
1. “E5 Liebman, What can we learn from J education? (entire)
2. Lester Thurow, Education and Economic Inequality (distributed)
3. Can one school make a difference?
   http://www.pdx.edu/insidepsu/dreaming-big-psu-alder-elementary

Wendy Kopp, Teach for America
Back when she started, she writes, “many assumed that fixing education would require fixing poverty first.” She is now convinced, however, that TFA teachers, “even in their first and second years of teaching, are proving it is possible for economically disadvantaged children to compete academically with their higher-income peers.” She points to the KIPP network of charter schools, the YES Prep charter schools in Houston, and the Mastery charter schools in Philadelphia as remarkable success stories, where disadvantaged children achieve high test scores. (Kopp acknowledges that her husband, Richard Barth, is the chief executive officer of KIPP, which also received $50 million from the US Department of Education in 2010.) These examples make her confident that “we don’t need to wait to fix poverty in order to ensure that all children receive an excellent education.” cf Diane Ravitch review of Kopp, A Chance to Make History: What Works and What Doesn’t in Providing an Excellent Education for All

PART II: HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN
PPS High School Redesign plan was motivated by the goals of efficiency (shrinking enrollment demands cost savings which can be had by cutting staff or schools or both) and equity (uneven outcomes shown by 47% dropout rate).
1. How well does it balance these goals in your judgment?
2. How does it reflect the culture of Portland and the history of US education?
3. Who are its supporters? Who are its critics and opponents? What are the obstacles to change in PPS?
4. If implemented, how – if at all -- would the plan change the character of high school education and educational outcomes in PPS?

February 14 Thursday (12) Fixing high schools How? Why?
Speaker  Betsy Hammond or Bill Graves, Oregonian
→DUE Final draft wrx2: What should and could the US borrow from Japan and Finland?

Reading
D2L Graves & Hammond, 3 part series on Fixing high schools – high schools that work (and why others don’t)
H6 Nathan Hale & Southridge High Schools Today
H7 Nathan Hale, Principles
Can Roosevelt High come back?
http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2010/12/can_portlands_roosevelt_high_t.html

Exercise
Scan H5 Bill Graves, Top 10 ingredients for effective high schools DUE 2/19

February 19 Tuesday (13) - A Close Look at PPS High Redesign
1) Mapping inequality in PPS - Charles Rynerson, IMPS
2) “How is High School System Design Different From Other PPS Change Processes? …
System-wide changes are designed to improve student outcomes and program equity at all high schools, instead of focusing reforms at specific schools alone.”

**PPS Redesign FAQs**

**D2L Print HSR Super Recommendations 4/26**

**View Data from PPS school webpages**

http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools-c/profiles/enrollment

**Scan wrx3 guidelines**

**Lecture**

How is PPS like/unlike other US urban school systems? Is it different? In a good way?

A 30 year history

1. Forces for change – disinvestment, gentrification/out-migration, small schools movement
   Nielsen (2.14.10) 3 challenges to PPS: 1) declining student population, 2) uneven enrollments, with 3) fewer courses (college prep, electives) & prepared students at small schools

2. Bob thinks 3 “N”s motivate PPS high school redesign
   Keep Neighborhood schools through “No” transfer policy & achieve Number-balancing
   The hope is that parity in enrollments ensures similar course offerings at all high schools but not all students will get same curriculum since they are allowed to choose college prep, language immersion, vocational training & focus schools

**Readings**

1. LINK Beth Slovic, Unofficial Chronological History

2. D2L Superintendent’s Recommendations 4/26, revised 5/5  Read 1 - 22 & skim the rest

3. E5 Scott Bailey, Education Funding in Oregon

4. The outcome - What got voted in October 2010?

**Recommended**

Ethan Johnson, the history of segregation & de-segregation in PPS

http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ohq/111.1/johnson.html

**Lecture**

Mapping inequality in PPS - Charles Rynerson, IMPS

“What we have failed to recognize is that our campuses are interconnected, that our policies and practices around student assignment and school choice create a web of impacts across the district. Not only does our system lead to concentrations of low-income students in certain schools . . . each and every one of our schools faces its own achievement gap. …. Cleveland, Grant, Lincoln and Wilson … 70% of white students enter 10th grade on track to graduate. But only half as many – 36% -- of black students are on track. … none of our schools work for all of their students equitably ”

**Exercise (from HSR-FAQ pp 1-12)**

From your scan of the three sample seven-period schedules for Andrea, Brian, and Carlos, how does the school someone attends shape opportunities for course-taking?

What is the core program that PPS seeks to guarantee for all students? Will putting it in place help achieve the targeted outcomes of closing the achievement gap and boosting graduation rates? How many core courses are required to graduate? How many electives?

**Scan guidelines wrx3 Assessing High School Redesign**

Teams divide up viewing Oregonian articles on D2L
February 21 Thursday(14) – Between school segregation: Neighborhood Schools vs Transfers

2009 PPS enrollment profile % from HSR-FAQ, 21
Neighborhood comprehensive 63%
Neighborhood small schools 11
District wide school 10
Charter 3
Community-based alternative & special services 14

Describe how the “pull” of transfer policy and the “push” of No Child Left Behind impacted PPS (see H4 capture rates)

“Ours is a tale of two cities,” said Dilafruz Williams, one of seven PPS Board members. “We are a segregated city by race and by class.”

In Beaverton, 93 percent of students attend their neighborhood schools. In Portland, only 63 percent of students do. Source Willamette Week 11.14.07

Readings
1. D2L Beth Slovic, Left Out: Why are two virtually identical eighth-grade girls treated so differently by PPS
2. Sacks, TDG Part 1. Rich Families, Poor Families ch1 Ashlea and Gillian & ch2 "Do We Look Intimidating?" Team Presentations
5. LINK No Child Left Behind
   http://answers.ed.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/4
   http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/4pillars.html

Exercise
Return wrx2
Teams prep for Part A

February 26 Tuesday(15) - Segregation within Schools
Read ahead - Be sure to complete PPS reports & assigned TDG chapters
Due: Draft/Outline Wrx3 Part A

Lecture/Discussion & Team Presentations
TDG Part 2. Struggle For The Soul Of Public Schools
ch3. Berkeley High and the Politics of Exclusion, ch4. "Do I Make the Kids Smart or Get Them into College?" ch5. Public Schools, Private Privilege
Part 3. Affirmative action for the rich 6. Class Matters

Recommended:
Roosevelt: Ivy League Dream Comes True
Roosevelt guides first-generation student to college

Exercise
20 min reading past years students’ reports – Everyone reads 3 to discuss with team
February 28 Thursday(16) Pushback to PPS High School Redesign
→ Teach How to cite weblinks in your final PPS report
→ Due: Teams outline wrx3 Part B

Readings
H11 Oregonian Editorial Board, Skeptical Eye
D2L Nielsen, Reform as a gamble
D2L Steve Buel, Equity? Not Much Oregonian, 5/28/10
D2L Lyn Shore, Portland school plan a washout (equity washing)
LINK Carrie Adams, Where is equity defined?
“So what if PPS offers Advanced Placement classes at all high schools when not all students are being prepared to take them. Where’s the equity?”
LINK Grant High parents hold pep rally 2/5/10 B2
http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2010/02/grant_high_neighborhood_parent.html
See comments that followed

Exercise
→ Teams outline wrx3 Part B

March 5 Tuesday(17) Remaking High Schools: From Inside or Outside?
→ Watch profile Brockton HS Restructuring Committee 13:09
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/uncategorized/brockton-high-proves-that-big-schools-can-be-good-schools/6959/

Team Presentations - TDG chapters ch10 A Dangerous Man, ch11 The Gatecrashers
D2L Review FAFSA form
Discuss Brockton HS Restructuring Committee
If time, Transformation at Forest Grove High School (FGHS)
http://www.ed.gov/blog/2010/05/voices-of-reform/
Among the secrets are programs to better track students academically, and smaller learning communities in which freshmen and sophomores take some classes with the same teachers and the same group of students. Incoming freshmen struggling in math or reading must take extra classes known as workshops. AP classes are open to any student.

Exercise
Exchange draft or outline HSR Part B

Recommended Head Start in PPS

March 7 Thursday(18) – Dropouts
→ BRING TO CLASS List Of Opinion Sources on PPS High School Reform
→ Teams outline HSR Part C Public Opinion
→ This weekend Watch Waiting for Superman (111 min)

Obama on the dropout problem:
“Over 1 million students don't finish high school each year—nearly one in three. Over half are African American and Latino. The graduation gap in some places between white students and classmates of color is 40 or 50 percent.”

In PPS, grad rate for ELL students is 39%. (Nielsen, Oregonian, 12/2/10)

Why do we de-emphasize vocational education when many college grads will be squeezed?
http://www.realclearmarkets.com/articles/2009/03/cities_college_grads_and_the_i.html

Lecture
Portland’s Dropout Crisis – Start with Betsy Hammond link below

Readings
1. TDG, Part 3. Affirmative Action For The Rich (Team Presentations)
7 (Part Church, Part Car Dealer), 8 (A Social Compact Broken), 9 (Government Gifts to the Rich)
ch 12. “I Always Imagined Myself as a Rock”
2. Betsy Hammond
3. Reconnecting Dropouts (see table Reasons for Dropping Out)
4. LINK Table comparing graduation rates for Oregon high schools,
http://schools.oregonlive.com/grads/
6. Betsy Hammond, SEI success

Exercise
On KIPP
http://www.kipp.org/reportcard

March 12 Tuesday(19) - Re-envisioning HS
→ Bring teams outline wrx 3 Part D Recommendations
→ Watch An Inconvenient Truth about Waiting for Superman (111 min)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLmXV4-CBOQ
Lecture + time to prep team reports

Sacks writes of the waste of human talent “as a consequence of the increasingly rigid class structure and the stagnant society it engenders.” “Social class inequality isn’t the problem. Inequality is inevitable….The problem is when the public enterprise itself becomes subservient to elite interests.” (299)

He worries about the future of inequality: “As more disadvantaged go through the educational pipeline without graduating from high school or earning a college degree, total incomes and salaries will stagnate or decline, state budgets will have to be cut in response to declining tax bases, and public services from health care to education will need to be reduced in a vicious cycle of diminishing resources.” (310)

Do you agree with his analysis? And with his remedy? What should be changed to remake US high schools with the goal of improved educational outcomes?

Reading
1. *TDG ch 15 (Where Are We Going?)
3. D2L  Jim Davis, A Blueprint for real and lasting high school reform
4. H17 Andy Payne, Call for public discussion 6.3, 3:15pm
5. Kristof on Japan-style pay/class sizes
6. Technical Schools Face Deep Federal Cuts

Exercise
Teams exchange drafts & prep for presentations
Complete An Inconvenient Truth about Waiting for Superman (111 min)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLmXV4-CBOQ

**March 14 Thursday(20) – Team Presentations - Attendance required**
→Bring rough draft of all four parts of HSR exercise to give to Stephanie

**A. Guidelines & schedule for team presentations (for 6 teams of 3-4)**
A1. Each team should briefly describe in its own words what’s right/wrong with PPS HS Redesign plan, give their recommendations and tell what you aim to fix, and why you think your recommendations would (or would not) be accepted by stakeholders (discussed in Part C)
Note: One recommendation from each team member. Everyone must take part in a team presentation and give feedback to another team
A2. Each team has 9-10 min to present & 4-5 min to respond to its partner
A3. We’ll vote for the top 3 recommendations at the end of session
A4 Bring a typed/handwritten copy of your team's recommendations and mail file to Bob.

B. Extra credit reflection - Final deadline: Wednesday 3/20, 12 midnight
You can earn up to 15 extra credit points by doing the course reflection. Takes about 20 minutes.
Download from D2L folder and paste in your replies.

Final grades are based on a 1000 point scale: 3 take-home writing exercises (wrx1 25%, wrx2 25%, wrx3 30%) Team presentation on Portland high school reform (5%) Attendance, participation & quizzes (15%) Adding 15 extra credit points could bump you from a B to an A for the 1st paper

**Stephanie will hold office hours Monday of finals week by appointment for HSR revisions**

**March 19 Tuesday 12 noon - Final deadline to email copies of HSR exercise to both**
Stephanie stthomas@pdx.edu & Bob rcliebman@gmail.com

**March 20 Wednesday 12 midnight - Final deadline for extra credit reflection**
Send to smithpat@pdx.edu
ONLINE ACCESS TO FILMS
You can download and play films from the School series we'll watch in class. So if you must miss class or want to review or share what you saw, just click

Common school 1770 -1890
*As American as Public School: 1900 - 1950
*The Bottom Line in Education: 1980 to the Present

POSSIBLE READINGS FOR GRAD CREDIT
Pasi Sahlberg, Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland? Teachers College Press


Mike Rose, Why School? Reclaiming Education for All of Us (The New Press, 2009)

Betty Wallace & Bill Graves, Poisoned Apple: The Bell-Curve Crisis and How our Schools Create Mediocrity and Failure (St Martin’s Press, 1995)