Course Description

In this course we will explore the field of comparative education which is a vibrant, multifaceted, multi-disciplinary scholarly enterprise. Although a great deal of education research engages in comparison, the field of comparative education is a distinct academic area where researchers use a range of techniques to understand educational policies and practices within and across different local, national, regional, and global settings.

In the first unit of the course, we will take a look at the field’s purposes and methods as they have been variously constituted over time, both as popular practice and within a scientific approach. We will take up some of the various theoretical frameworks that have been adopted and debated along the way, including: structural functionalism, modernization theory, (neo)Marxism, dependency theory, and both post-structural and post-modern theories. During the middle of the semester, we will turn our attention to some contemporary research problems and paradigms including: policy borrowing & lending, neo-institutional sociology, anthropology, (post)colonialism and international development. In the final weeks of the semester, we will “reassemble” the work of comparative education by surveying education in several major world regions as well as emerging social theory that might be employed to advance the field in the coming years.

Diversity is a central concern of this course, as we will directly engage with the differences and similarities of educational experiences of diverse groups of people around the world as well as the political, cultural, social, and economic contexts that both enable and disable educational opportunity and achievement. The assignments in the course are designed to develop your analytic writing ability and demonstrate your understanding of important issues, theories, and problems in comparative education.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate a sound grasp of the major issues and perspectives within comparative education, the nature of comparative education research, and the work of major figures in the field. Accordingly, this course aims to provide the following (E)ssential and (I)mportant objectives:

(E) Encourage you to gain factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods and trends);
(E) Introduce you to fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories;
(E) Emphasize your learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view;
(I) Increase your ability to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions); and
(I) Help you develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
This course also aims to advance the mission of the Cultural and Educational Policy Studies (CEPS) program at Loyola University Chicago which seeks to provide a multi-disciplinary examination of education policy and practice with an overarching emphasis on social justice. This course advances the following program outcomes:

- CEPS graduates apply multi-disciplinary (humanities, social science) perspectives to issues and questions in educational policy and practice;
- CEPS graduates critically assess the methodological, epistemological and ethical foundations of research;
- CEPS graduates recognize education’s cultural dimensions and leverage cultural analyses in their work to improve educational experiences and institutions.

Finally, this course aims to advance the following learning outcomes:

**Commitment to Social Justice.** Students will demonstrate the following competencies related to social justice and service:

- An understanding of the ethical dimensions of higher education’s role in fostering social justice across the world; an understanding of, and ability to reflect critically on, historical and contemporary issues within higher education and to reflect on how colleges and universities can address these issues in a just society; an appreciation of, and respect for, diverse perspectives, cultures, ways of knowing, etc.

**Analytical Inquiry.** Students will demonstrate the following competencies related to analytical inquiry:

- The ability to develop and support reasonable and logically sound interpretations; the ability to analyze various organizational, curricular, fiscal, legal, cultural, and historical structures, models, policies, and professional practices from multiple points of view and theoretical perspectives; the ability to use theoretical and empirical research to address and solve administrative and instructional problems in colleges and universities; and the ability to continually assess and improve one’s own analytical abilities.

**Research and Assessment Competence.** Students will demonstrate the following outcomes related to research and assessment competence:

- A thorough understanding of different paradigmatic assumptions and how they influence the research process; the ability to read and critically review various types of research studies.

**Communication Skills.** Students will demonstrate the following communication competencies:

- Effective written communication skills and online classroom engagement that demonstrate high levels of clarity, comprehension, synthesis, critical thinking, and analysis.

These outcomes and objectives are infused across this course with the intent of enacting and advancing the *School of Education (SOE) High Concept*, a vision that “The School of Education of Loyola University Chicago is a community that transforms its members to impact urban and global communities through the principles of social justice.” Students in the course will be assessed via LiveText in relation to the following SOE Conceptual Framework Standards:

- CF1: Candidates demonstrate an understanding of a current body of literature and are able to critically evaluate new practices and research in their field.
- CF3: Candidates demonstrate an understanding of issues of social justice and inequity.

Each course in Loyola’s SOE focuses on one or more professional dispositions. In this course students are offered opportunities to receive feedback on their dispositional growth in the areas of *professionalism* and *fairness*. The specific descriptions for expected behavior in these areas can be found on the rubric posted in LiveText for this course.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

General University Policies
Use this link (www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/) to read the following statements on university policies: Academic Honesty, Accessibility, Conceptual Framework, EthicsLine Reporting Hotline, and Electronic Communication Policies and Guidelines.

Diversity
This course addresses diversity in the field of education through many of its assigned readings. In addition, as instructor, I will encourage class members to consider ways of thinking about diversity (e.g., social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, race, sexual and gender identity, and age) as we consider different topics. Diversity among enrollees in the course is critical to this course’s success. As instructor, I will promote full participation and contribution by all class members, asking that varied viewpoints be thoroughly considered and respected by all of our class.

Use of Technology
As part of integrating technology into teaching and learning, we will use the Sakai course management system (https://sakai.luc.edu/). Additionally, you must have working access to your Loyola email account. Either use your @luc.edu address or set it to forward to another email account you check regularly since your @luc.edu email is the one used to communicate with you throughout this course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following two textbooks are required for this course, both of which are available electronically via the LUC library (you will need your LUC login information for access):


http://www.luc.eblib.com/EBLWeb/patron/?target=patron&extendedid=P_478188_0

All other readings will be available electronically (uploaded to Sakai Resources or available online via Loyola Library) or can be found at the websites indicated in the syllabus.

Course Guidelines
An aspiration for this course is that as a cohort you will begin to create an optimal condition for collaborative work: that you express yourself respectfully and honestly; that you find engaging one another a valuable part of your learning process; and that you feel safe to explore ideas and raise questions with one another. I’m looking forward to joining your ongoing conversation.

What I expect from you
• Be aware that this course uses Central Standard Time (Chicago, US), which is GMT - 6 hours, as its benchmark. For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the time zone for the rest of this syllabus as CST.
• Because of the online modality, timeliness is of the utmost importance. Meeting deadlines is not
just a part of calculating your participation grades, **but helps to enrich the entire online experience for all of us**, making sure we are all part of the ongoing conversation.

- During the first week of the course, I request that each student email to schedule a brief meeting with me via Skype. This will allow us to get to know one another, so that I can learn your particular interests and aims. Please keep in mind that the course uses CST, so plan accordingly.
- Beginning with Module 2, we will follow the following general routine (excluding other assignments, such as blogs, group presentations, papers):
  - Wednesdays: I will upload lecture notes and details for the upcoming week’s readings.
  - Sundays: You are to post to the discussion board, responding the week’s readings, by midnight on Sunday CST.
  - On some Mondays: You will need to post blogs or group presentations (Wikis).
  - Tuesdays: By this day, you are to have read and responded to at least two of your colleagues on the discussion board. A late posting is considered any posting made after midnight on Tuesday CST.
  - Thursdays: I will provide a summary of the previous week’s discussion with notes.
- You are welcome to supplement your postings (so long as links are given via the Sakai tools) with videos, audio recordings, and/or pictures.
- Please regularly check your Loyola email throughout the week.
- All written assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents. This work must be double-spaced and utilize Times New Roman 12 pt. font.
- This course uses the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style. Please be sure to use this for all formal assignments, including blogs, papers, and Wikis. An APA style guide can be found on Sakai.
- You must have Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to read the .pdf files provided for the course.

**What you can expect from me**

- I will be available to respond to your questions/concerns via email, Skype, or WeChat. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you have as you are completing the readings or assignments.
- You may contact me at lfryer@luc.edu. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours of receiving them.
- If you would like to schedule additional Skype meetings, please contact me at lfryer@luc.edu to set an appointment.
- I will check my Loyola email regularly. If you do not receive a reply from me within 24 hours, you should call or write again to ask if I received your message.
- I will provide a wrap-up of our weekly virtual conversations as a weekly blog post. I do this in order to provide a synthesis of the various paths the conversation may take. My summaries are not intended to be definitive, but rather provisional, remembering that they may well lead to further conversation in the following weeks.

**General information**

- The course will be divided broadly into three thematic sections: **Assembling/Disassembling Comparative Education: Purposes & Methods; Comparative Education Research Problematics & Paradigms; and Reassembling Comparative Education: Putting Comparative Education to Work**.
- On Wednesdays I will post in Sakai to help frame each module’s readings and discussion/blog posts. I will also occasionally include a PowerPoint or audio lecture to set up the week’s discussion or to provide background information.
- This course will use three tools via Sakai: the discussion board (*Forum*), *Wiki* and *Blogs*. This is meant to take the place of face-to-face classroom discussions, and therefore it is crucial that we all, myself included, take care to respond to one another thoughtfully and respectfully. My aim is
to adapt dialogic instruction, which privileges collaborative inquiry, to our virtual classroom. You are encouraged to:

- Pose questions, interpret, and construct knowledge through your interactions with everyone in your cohort;
- Strive to pick up on, elaborate, and question what your colleagues are saying;
- Ask authentic questions for which you do not have a pre-specified answer;
- Seek to engage each other’s responses by incorporating them into your further questions or comments;
- Take responsibility for making the discussion (via Forum or Blogs) useful and interesting. So even if you have met the minimum requirements (a post and a response), it is advisable that you continue to extend an exchange so that there are as many turns as need be to fully explore an issue/question.

Assignments & Grading

Participation

Regular and active participation is an important aspect of this online course. The expectation is that students will log on a minimum of three (3) times per week. It is critical that you read all of the module/assignment materials as well as all of the online class discussions and blog materials. All students are expected to do the work assigned and to notify the instructor when emergencies arise that make it impossible to do so. In terms of quality, your submissions should be well-written, follow the style and format guidelines listed above and clearly address the issues being discussed. Note: your posts on the discussion board (Forum) may take a more informal approach and do not require the use of APA.

Active Online Assignments

Forum Posts
- I will read all posts and will respond occasionally; when necessary I will act as a moderator; and I will provide a summary of the conversation/follow-up at the module’s end.
- Your original post to the discussion board (not a reply to other students) should be a minimum of 150 words.
- You must respond to at least two other classmates, each reply having a minimum of 75 words.
- Your post ought to:
  - demonstrate understanding of the topic being discussed;
  - highlight connections you are making between readings and discussion;
  - relate new information with material previously covered and/or with prior knowledge;
  - discuss at a critical level (in other words, not just reciting facts from the reading, discussion, etc.);
  - and offer reasons for your opinions.
- Posts that appear after the deadlines will not be graded.
- Discussion board etiquette: no offensive language; no rudeness; be respectful, even when you disagree; and clearly state what you believe, even if you’re disagreeing.
- You may also refer to the following rubric as regards the discussion board:
  http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/facultycenter/pdfs/rubric_asynchronous_rev.pdf

Blogs
- Your original post should be a minimum of 300 words.
- Describe/summarize the work/topic you are focusing on in as short a space as possible.
- Know the points you want to make beforehand.
- Check for spelling, grammar, and flow.
- Use APA citation style.
• When commenting on a blog, give a substantive, thoughtful response (minimum of 100 words).
• Reply to comments in a thoughtful, respectful way to encourage creativity and discussion.
• Provide some context for your comment, be respectful, make a point, and proofread.

Wikis
• A Wiki is an online publication that allows partners or a group to create a “living document.”
• All contributors may help to determine the post’s organizational scheme as the document develops.
• Wikis will be assessed in terms of their content, writing quality, accuracy of citations/references, appearance and student contributions/collaboration.
• Regarding your conclusions: keep it simple, add your final thoughts and leave things open (for example, ask a question), so as to invite discussion.
• Use APA citation style.
• When commenting on a Wiki, give a substantive, thoughtful response (minimum of 50 words).
• Reply to comments in a thoughtful, respectful way to encourage creativity and discussion.
• Provide some context for your comment, be respectful, make a point, and proofread.

Collaborative Presentations (Wikis)
At the beginning of the semester I will assign you each to groups and on two occasions across the semester (September 28 and October 19) you and your group will be charged with preparing a presentation for your classmates on a particular set of readings or topic. This assigned small group work will require you to engage with one another via Wiki collaborations and/or Skype meetings. Additional directions for this small group work will be shared on Sakai.

Paper Assignments
You will also be required to write two papers. The first paper will be a 6-8 page critical analysis paper in which you examine the comparative education research approach advanced by Bray and Thomas in their (1995) “Levels Of Comparison In Educational Studies: Different Insights From Different Literatures And The Value Of Multilevel Analyses” in light of the various theories and methods discussed in the first part of the course. This paper will not require additional research outside of the Bray and Thomas chapter and assigned course readings. Submit your paper via Sakai by 11:55pm CST on Wednesday, October 14th. Additional information about this assignment will be shared later in the semester.


The second paper will be a 15-20 page paper that examines a particular education policy issue (e.g., privatization, gender equity, human rights education, higher education access, decentralization, standardized testing, etc.) in a specific region of the world (variously defined). By its design, the paper will have a comparative dimension and one of your challenges is to establish the grounding and theoretical framing of your comparative work. While the paper assignment does not absolutely require original empirical data-gathering, you are welcome to use policy documents and government and non-governmental reports to advance your investigation. Your papers will also require wide reading in and discussion of the existing academic, scholarly literature on the topic you choose to investigate. In preparation for this paper, you will be required to post two blogs that share: 1) your prospectus for the paper (due Sunday, October 25) and 2) your research/writing progress (due Sunday, November 15). Please consider these as tools to help you organize and plan your final paper, and as a way of drawing upon one another’s feedback in the research/writing process. These blog posts will be primarily shared between your small group members; thus you will be only required to read the blog posts of your group.
members and to offer two of them feedback. Submit your final paper via Sakai by **11:55pm CST on Wednesday, December 9th.** Additional information on this assignment will be shared later in the semester.

**Evaluation & Grading**

Paper 1 will compose 20% of your final grade in the course, while Paper 2 will compose 35% of your final grade in the course. Grading criteria for the papers will be outlined on each assignment sheet. The blogs in preparation for your Paper 2 will be 10% of your grade and the assigned small group work (Wikis) will compose 10% of your grade. Finally, your class participation grade will make up the remaining 25% of your final grade. Your participation grade will reflect the quality of your contributions via Forum posts – that is, the insights, questions, feedback, and general dialogue you engage in when posting and responding to your classmates’ posts in Forum, blogs, and group Wiki presentations.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

**Where to find the Course Readings**

You will find most of the readings in the course textbooks or through online resources, especially LUC Libraries (http://libraries.luc.edu/), EBL (http://luc.eblib.com.flagship.luc.edu/patron/), and Sakai Resources (separated by Module #). If you have particular questions about library resources, the assigned librarian for this course is Tracy Ruppman, who can be reached at truppman@luc.edu.

**Additional Information**

- Required readings are mandatory, while recommended readings help by rounding out ideas or giving additional perspectives about a topic. Many students find them very useful and utilize them in their posts and papers.
- **All assignments, including posts and papers, are due by 11:55 PM CST on the dates mentioned** – so please plan accordingly!
- Use your posts to ask about complex topics or definitions that you might encounter during the readings. Chances are someone else has the same questions or interpretations, which can lead do a lively discussion.
- Don’t forget to use your small group as a resource throughout the course. Schedule meetings outside of class if needed to continue to engage with the material and each other.

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**Module 1: Course Introduction**

*August 24-30*

This week’s module will be different from all of the others in terms of structure/timing. You will find an introductory slideshow with audio lecture posted on Wednesday, August 27. Readings for the week, to introduce the course, are listed below. We can chat about any of the reading that you select to do one-on-one during our Skype meeting.

**Required Reading**


Assignments
No need to post for Module 1.
Schedule and meet for Skype appointments (1-on-1 and small group).
Please select a representative from your small group to send the instructor an email after your small group meeting confirming the meeting and any questions which may have come up.

ASSEMBLING AND DISASSEMBLING
COMPARATIVE EDUCATION PURPOSES AND METHODS

Module 2: Comparative Education as Science and Popular Practice (19th and early 20th Centuries)
September 3-9

Required Reading

Also read one (1) additional 19th century “comparative education study” from the following list (pdfs in Resources):
• Arnold, M. (1868). Schools and universities on the continent
• Bache, A. D. (1839). Report on education in Europe
• Barnard, H. (1854). National education in Europe
• Griscom, J. (1823). A year in Europe
• Mann, H. (1844). 7th annual report
• Stowe, C. E. (1837). Elementary public instruction in Europe

Assignments
Discussion Board post due Sunday, September 6
Comment on colleague(s) post(s) due Tuesday, September 8

Module 3: Structural Functionalism & Modernization Theory
September 10-16

Required Reading

Recommended Reading

Assignments
Discussion Board post due **Sunday, September 13**
Comment on colleague(s) post(s) due **Tuesday, September 15**

Module 4: (Neo)Marxism and Dependency Theory
September 17-23

Required Reading

Recommended Reading

Assignments
Discussion board post due **Sunday, September 20**
Comment on colleague(s) post(s) due **Tuesday, September 22**

Module 5: After Structuralism, After Modernism
September 24-30

Required Reading

Assigned Groups Reading/Presentation of one of the following:

Assignments
Discussion board post due Sunday, September 27
Group presentations via Wiki due Monday, September 28
Comment on colleague(s) posts & Wikis by Tuesday, September 29

COMPARATIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH PROBLEMATICS & PARADIGMS

October 1-7
Fall Break October 4-6 (no classes)

Required Watching
Comparatively Speaking: An Oral History of the First 50 Years of the Comparative and International Education Society (Video posted online)

Assignments
Share thoughts and discuss movie by Wednesday, September 7

Module 6: Problems of Policy Borrowing and Lending
October 8-14

Required Reading

Recommended Reading

Assignments
Discussion board post due **Sunday, October 11**
Comment on colleague(s) posts by **Tuesday, October 13**
**PAPER 1 DUE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14**
Module 7: Neoinstitutional Sociology  
October 15-21

Required Reading


Recommended Reading

Assigned Groups Reading/Presentation of One of the Following:


Assignments
Discussion Board post due by **Sunday, October 18**
Group presentations posted in Wiki by **Monday, October 19**
Comment on colleague(s) posts & Wikis by **Tuesday, October 20**

Module 8: Anthropological Traditions  
October 22-28

Required Reading


Assignments
Discussion Board post due **Sunday, October 25**
Blog #1: Prospectus for final paper due **Sunday, October 25**
Comment on colleague(s) discussion board posts and blogs by **Tuesday, October 27**
Module 9: Postcolonialism and International Development
October 29-November 4

Required Reading

Discussion Board post due **Sunday, November 1**
Comment on colleague(s) discussion board posts by **Tuesday, November 3**

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Module 10: “Constructing Development” Part 1
November 5-11

Required Reading

Discussion Board post due **Sunday, November 8**
Comment on colleague(s) discussion board posts by **Tuesday, November 10**

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Module 11: “Constructing Development” Part 2
November 12-18

Required Reading

Discussion Board post due **Sunday, November 15**
Blog #2: Progress on research for final paper due **Sunday, November 15**
Comment on colleague(s) discussion board posts and blogs by **Tuesday, November 17**

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Module 12: Regional Trends, Political Rationalities
November 19-25

Required Reading
Keating, J., et al. (2013). The political economy of educational reform in Australia, Britain and the United
States. Chapter 10 in *Comparative Education* textbook.
Samoff, J., & Carrol, B. (2013). Education for All in Africa: Not catching up, but setting the pace. Chapter 16 in *Comparative Education* textbook.

Discussion Board post due **Sunday, November 22**
Comment on colleague(s) discussion board posts by **Tuesday, November 24**

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**November 26-29**
**Thanksgiving Break (no classes)**

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**Note: Special shortened schedule in effect**

**Module 13: Reassembling Social Theory for Comparative Education**
*November 30-December 6*

**Required Reading**
Sobe, N. W. (forthcoming). All that is global is not world culture: Accountability systems and educational apparatuses. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*.

**Assignments**
**Note: Special shortened schedule in effect**
Discussion Board post due **Friday, December 4**
Respond to colleague(s) discussion board posts by **Sunday, December 6**
**PAPER 2 DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9**