Course Introduction

Is federal education policy really changing teachers’ practice, or is it driving teachers out of the profession? Do teacher unions do more good than harm, or vice versa? Can we universally define a “quality teacher”? Why do so many new teachers leave the profession in the first years of their career? Why are people so enthusiastic about professional learning communities, and do they even work? What made teacher salary such a contentious topic of social conversation this past fall during the Chicago teachers strike?

We live in an era where the practice and profession of teaching engenders challenging questions such as these on a regular basis. These are the kinds of questions that we will address in this course. Using sociological perspectives and theory, we will dig into these questions in pursuit of a deeper understanding of the practice and profession of teaching.

School of Education Conceptual Framework

In keeping with the SOE’s Conceptual Framework (Professionalism in Service of Social Justice), I seek in this course to ground students’ work as educators, administrators and researchers in empirical knowledge gathered by scholars concerned with the sociology of education and the study of teaching. I have designed this course with an aim to further develop students’ ability to think critically about, and respond to, social phenomena that impact, and occur among, teachers, which in turn impacts schools and students. This course’s topics and readings explore the complex dynamics, demands and contexts of teaching in today’s socioeconomically and racially diverse schools. My hope is that this course will support students’ ability to reason about and respond to issues of teaching practice and the teaching profession with strong mind and spirit.

Course Goals

In addition to the goals as expressed above, my other goal for students of this focused seminar course are threefold. First, I hope that students will expand their factual knowledge about various topics, both historical and contemporary, related to the sociology of teaching and the
study of teaching. My second goal is that students will develop their ability to investigate, analyze and communicate effectively about topics related to the practice and profession of teaching. Finally, I want students to learn how to use course material and research they encounter as they work on their independent research for this class to strengthen their thinking about current problems and challenges in the fields of education and, particularly, teaching. Because of these three-pronged goals, this course packs in substantial reading on a range of topics, and will blend structured activities and assignments with independent work opportunities, particularly students’ responsibility to direct seminar discussions and choose topics for their major research paper. Abilities developed in this course should reach the level required for developing a conceptual framework or literature review for a thesis paper, dissertation proposal or other empirical research.

Assessment of learning
 I will assess students’ learning both through classroom interactions (discussion, short presentations) and formal assignments. This course has a few small assignments and one major assignment, a research paper, which includes series of smaller assignments that will help you develop this final product. I will use the following criteria for determining your course grade:

Participation—20%
• Attendance—13%
• Class participation—7%
Brief discussion of media coverage of teachers—5%
Short paper 1—10%
Short paper 2—10%
Research paper—55%
• Paper topic—5%
• Bibliography—7.5%
• Introduction section—12.5%
• Paper—30%

Each component of students’ responsibilities for these assignments, as well as the criteria used for assessing learning, is described below.

Class Participation and Attendance
This seminar course is very interactive and places a high premium on every student’s participation. While introductory graduate courses are often structured to manage students’ participation (through planned activities and instructor lecture), this class will be structured instead as a shared, rigorous conversation, where the instructor facilitates, but does not dominate. This arrangement will require thoughtful, detailed reading of assigned texts and regular contributions (e.g., multiple times per class meeting) to class discussions where we unpack, consider and compare the ideas and data presented in the texts you will read. Participation, including regular attendance, is therefore worth 20% of your final grade.

Please come on time to class, having read all assigned materials (either the text hardcopy or an electronic copy where you have taken notes either on the document or separately), and
ready to discuss them with your colleagues. If you are using an electronic copy of the text, please make sure it is accessible to you at the beginning of class. If you come unprepared, you will have a difficult time fully participating in class, which will impact the entire seminar. Please notify me in advance if you must miss or come late to a class. For any missed class meetings, I will ask you to write a brief reaction paper to the assigned readings, but missing class (except in cases of personal or medical emergency) will negatively impact your participation grade. You will still be held responsible for all assigned readings, due dates for written assignments, and course requirements or updates discussed in class. Please check in with one of your colleagues if you miss a class meeting.

The use of electronics (cell phones, computers) is often a necessity of modern life, but also interferes with participation in class, particularly in this interactive course. Please refrain from using electronic devices in class if their use (e.g., texting, internet surfing, writing aside from taking notes) does not pertain directly to your participation in our course.

Written assignments

Brief discussion of media coverage of teachers
For this assignment, each student will briefly discuss a piece of contemporary media coverage of teachers. The media may be print, electronic or broadcast, but you must be able to share it with the class by providing a photocopy to class members at the beginning of your presentation or an electronic link (in the form of a URL, which you can send to class members the day of your presentation). Education blogs, including This Week in Education, Eduwonk, GothamSchools, Flypaper and Joanne Jacobs, are a few good sources of news stories, but feel free to cast your net widely. Please come to class prepared to do the following:

- Briefly summarize the piece that you are discussing (in less than 2 minutes).
- Point out any portrayal of teachers (positive, negative, expectations, assignment of responsibility, fantasies, etc.) contained in the piece, and critique this portrayal if you feel it merits critique.
- Draw connections to course readings or discussions.

This assignment will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. Students will sign up for presentation slots during the first class meeting.

Short paper 1: Conditions of teaching today
Following our discussions and readings from the first three class meetings, please discuss current-day tensions in the teaching profession and how these represent continuity with or divergence from the conditions of teaching described in “classic” pieces on the topic. In this short paper, please draw at least two connections between current day and “classic” conditions of teaching. This paper should be three to five pages long, and should present a clear thesis statement based on your analysis. Grading criteria for this paper are:

- Presence of a thesis statement that makes an original argument based on the material you have analyzed (3 points)
- Presence of at least two clear connections between current-day tensions in the teaching profession and earlier renditions of the conditions of teaching (5 points)
- Quality of writing: Clear, concise language, thematically-organized paragraphs, and evidence of proofreading for grammar, spelling and punctuation (2 points)
This paper is worth 10% of your grade and is due on Sunday, February 3, 6:00 p.m..

Short paper 2: The Chicago teachers strike and the emotions of teaching.
This short paper will draw upon the materials we read in class on teachers and the media, teacher organizing and the emotions of teaching. Please locate and analyze 1 or possibly 2 (but no more) pieces of media (print, electronic or broadcast) that address the 2012 teachers strike. Please analyze how teachers’ emotional displays (how they express emotions, such as caring, anger, assertiveness, frustration) are addressed in these piece(s). For this paper, the pieces you choose will need to address in some way teachers’ emotional expression, whether this discussion is positive or negative in tone. If you have questions about whether your selection fits the assignment, please check with me. In your paper, please employ enough description of research on teachers’ emotional work/emotional labor, and teachers in the media so that you can analyze your selected media pieces. It is up to you to frame the analysis, but please ask for guidance if you feel you need it. This paper should be three to six pages long, and should present a clear thesis statement based on your analysis.

Grading criteria for this paper:
- Presence of a thesis statement that makes an original argument based on the material you have analyzed. (1 point)
- Clear description of the media piece(s) you are analyzing, particularly how teacher emotions are portrayed. (1 point)
- Presence of framing ideas drawn from emotional work/emotional labor literature and/or media theory from course readings. Please clearly describe the ideas you are using for your analysis. (3 points)
- Evidence of analysis itself: Please apply the ideas from course readings as you analyze your media pieces. What do you see when you examine these media pieces from the perspectives of emotional labor and media coverage of teachers? (3 points)
- Quality of writing: Clear, concise language, thematically-organized paragraphs, and evidence of proofreading for grammar, spelling and punctuation. (2 points)

This paper is worth 10% of your grade and is due on Sunday, March 31 at 6:00 p.m.

Major Research Paper
Given that I have structured the class around selected readings, the research paper assignment gives students the opportunity to choose and investigate a topic of interest to them. I strongly encourage you to consider how this paper can help you to advance your own intellectual and professional agenda. What are you interested in exploring in your program? What issues and interests brought you here (to this program, or this course) in the first place? What kinds of issues do you want to explore in your master’s thesis, qualifying exams, or doctoral dissertation? How can you configure this paper as an opportunity to examine some part of this larger agenda, in a way that will move your thinking or your professional goals forward? I am open to any topic related to the sociology of teaching. Some options include (but are not limited to) a structured literature review on a specific topic, a history of a particular issue, policy or problem related to
teaching, the analysis of a contemporary issue related to teaching, or the analysis of existing data related to teachers (e.g. public use data). Whatever topic you choose, your paper will need to synthesize and analyze data, and present an explicit and coherent argument that flows through and structures the paper. A rubric for the evaluation of this paper follows at the end of this syllabus.

This assignment will proceed through the semester in stages, giving you multiple opportunities for instructor feedback as you develop your project and work towards your final project, a paper approximately 20-25 pages in length (double-spaced, using 12 point font and 1 inch margins, excluding references).

First, please prepare a paper topic proposal (1-2 pages). This is due on Tuesday, February 20, at 7:00 pm. In this proposal, describe the topic you want to investigate, the literature and/or data you anticipate using in your research, and why this topic is important to study. I realize all too well the pain of having to explain your topic’s importance, and ask you to engage in this exercise on purpose. Why should you spend most of your semester researching this topic? Why does it matter now? To whom does it matter? Whom might your findings help? Does your proposed topic aim to fill any gaps in research literature? As with all assignments in this course, please feel free to contact me if you have questions or encounter challenges in writing this proposal. This assignment will be graded on a pass/revise basis. If you do not present sufficient information as requested in this proposal, I will ask you to revise and add to your original proposal. I will give you written feedback on your proposal and we will discuss your proposal and your subsequent work on it in our mid-semester consultation (held in late February and early March).

Second, approximately one month after I have responded to your paper topic proposals, I ask that you send me a preliminary bibliography for your paper on Monday, March 25, by 5:00 pm. While I do not expect you to have absolutely concluded your research by this date, I do expect you to have identified key resources that you will use for your paper. Please ensure that you conduct thorough literature searches by not only conducting a quick search using ERIC, JSTOR or another search engine. You should also identify key articles related to your topic, then look at who that author cites, as well as what other authors have cited that article/text since it was published. For this assignment, I am looking for a well-developed reference list that shows effort to know your topic well. This paper is worth 7.5% of your course grade. I will assign up to 7.5 points for this assignment based on the extent to which this reference list is well-developed and shows evidence of effort to deeply research your chosen topic. Along with your reference list, feel free to include any questions or requests for guidance that you have for meat this point in your research, and I will respond to them in my feedback.

Third, 2/12 months into our course, please submit a introduction section for your research paper on Friday, 4/12, by 5:00 pm. This section should be from 1 to 3 pages long, double-spaced. It should present the argument that you will develop in your final paper, the rationale for studying this topic now, an overview of the literature and/or data you will use for your paper, and a plan for the paper (first, I will consider. . . then, I will examine. . . Finally, I will. . . ). This assignment is worth 12.5 percent of your course grade. I will assign points for this assignment based on the extent to which you present a clear thesis argument for the longer research paper
you will write (5.5 points), concisely situate your topic in relevant issues (present and/or historical) and literature (3 points), present a plan for the paper (2 points), and write in a fashion that is clear and well-organized (2 points). Clearly, a lot is packed into this short assignment; that is the idea. I want you to spend time just focusing on the beginning portion of your paper and laying out what you will do. My hope is that this endeavor will set you up to write a well-organized, coherent paper. I do not expect you to leave this statement unchanged in your final paper. Turning in a draft gives you an opportunity to receive my feedback, which you will hopefully incorporate as you work towards your final product.

Finally, the paper! All students may, if they choose to, turn in an optional first draft of the paper. In order for me to thoroughly read and respond to these first drafts in time for students to make use of my feedback, I need to receive them no later than April 19. I will return first drafts to students, with my comments, by April 24. Papers that go through multiple drafts tend to be stronger, but aside from this, I will not award any “brownie points” for students who submit a first draft. I will assign a grade for any drafts turned in. You can elect whether to keep this grade as your final paper grade, or can revise your paper according to any suggestions I might give. Because there is a quick turnaround between submitting a paper, my grading it, and your revising it to turn it in as a final draft, I cannot accept first draft papers submitted after April 19. Your final draft of your research paper is due Thursday, May 2 at 12:00 p.m. I will use a rubric to evaluate this final paper. That rubric follows at the very end of this syllabus. I will send you a full set of comments by email after I have evaluated your paper.

About written assignments

Paper length
Please adhere to the stated page length requirements (which do not include reference lists). Pages should be double-spaced with a 12-point font and 1-inch margins. I reserve the right to not grade material that exceeds the stated maximum length.

Reference lists and citation
Please prepare reference lists for all written assignments where you cite other published work. Please follow your academic discipline’s format for in-text citations and reference lists. In the field of education, this is usually APA, but if you use another style (e.g., MLA), that is fine as well.

Submission of assignments
Please submit all written assignments directly to me via the dropbox function on Blackboard.

Due dates
As your instructor, I expect timely submission of assignments or clear, proactive communication if alternative arrangements are needed. If you need to extend an assignment date due to pressing circumstances, please contact me before the assignment is due and we will negotiate a workable date. If you do not make arrangements with me before the assignment’s due date, late assignments’ grades will be reduced by one-third of a grade (3 points) per day. Written assignments turned in on the due date, but after the due time, will be considered late.
**Communication between instructor and students**
In addition to updates I may give verbally in class, I will occasionally send updates to the class via email, using the LOCUS system. I will assume that if I have sent email updates to you at the address provided on LOCUS, and the email has not bounced back to me, that you have read it.

If you wish to reach me, the best way to do so is by my Loyola email address. I will respond within 48 hours between Monday and Friday.

**Course Readings**
The following assigned texts are available for purchase at the Loyola University Bookstore, Water Tower Campus (Baumhart Hall, 26 E. Pearson), and are also available on reserve at the Lewis Library (25 East Pearson, 6th floor).


Other readings are either available through the LUC libraries’ electronic course reserves (at http://libraries.luc.edu/, under “Find” and then “Course Reserves,” noted below in this syllabus as LUC Libraries website), LUC’s Blackboard website for this course (noted below as “Posted on Blackboard”), or, where readings are accessible on the internet, I have provided a searchable link. Books from which we read a portion (such as a chapter) are also on reserve at Lewis Library. All assigned readings are listed below by the week in which they are assigned.

**Class meetings**
**Class 1, January 16**
Course overview, overview of history of teaching profession at points in time
Sign up for brief discussion of media coverage of teachers

Class 2, January 23

Conditions of teaching: Classic perspectives


Lortie, D. (1975/2002). Schoolteacher: A sociological study. (Chapter 1 (p. 1-24), Chapters 2 and 3 (Chapter-end summaries only), Chapter 6 (p. 132-161)).

Class 3, January 30

Contemporary conditions of teaching


Spillane, pages 7-8, 113-167.


Sunday, February 3, 6:00 p.m.: Short Paper 1 Due (please submit via Turnitin.)

Class 4, February 6

Teacher professionalism and status: Who sets agenda for teachers’ training and work?


Class 5, February 13
New teachers: Where the conditions of teaching meet teacher training and status
Sign up for consultation regarding paper topic


No class February 20.
Research paper topic due at 7:00 p.m. (please submit via Turnitin.)
Please begin your reading for 2/27—there is a lot!!

Class 6, February 27
Sociodemographics of the teaching profession
Class ends at 9:00 p.m. to provide time for scheduled paper topic consultations

Tyack, 59-65.


No class March 6—Enjoy your spring break!

Class 7, March 13
Teachers and the media
Class ends at 9:00 p.m. to provide time for scheduled paper topic consultations


Class 8, March 20
Teaching and emotions

Hochschild, pages 1-23, 35-75, and 89-136


*Monday, March 25, 5:00 pm.: Preliminary bibliography for major research paper is due (Please submit via Turnitin.)*

**Class 9, March 27**  
**Teacher unions**

Tyack, 255-268


*Sunday, March 31 at 6:00 p.m.: Short paper 2 due (Please submit via Turnitin.)*

**Class 10, April 3**  
**Teacher turnover and retention**


**Class 11, April 10**

*Teachers together: Professional learning communities and teacher social networks*


**Friday, 4/12, 5:00 pm: Major research paper introduction section due (Please submit via Turnitin).**

**Class 12, April 17**

*Teacher effects on student learning, value-added methodology*


Recommended, but not required:

*Friday, April 19, 5:00 p.m.: Optional first draft of major research paper due (please submit via Turnitin.)*

*Class 13, April 24*

Expanding/redefining the teacher role; Course summary and evaluations


*Major research paper due on Thursday, May 2 at 12:00 p.m. (Please submit via Turnitin).*
### Rubric for grading major research paper

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Possible Points (Out of 100)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argument clarity and coherence: Argument is clearly stated and flows from beginning to end of paper in a fashion that is seamless (leaves no gaps), well-developed and easy to follow.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument and claims are substantiated with credible evidence.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper reflects thorough efforts to gather and analyze relevant evidence</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of writing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing is clear and easy to understand, even if concepts communicated are complex.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper is well-organized, and is broken into sections that mirror the procession of the author’s argument.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions of writing are followed (spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation).</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### University policies regarding this course

**Academic Honesty**
Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. The School of Education’s Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml). For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml)

Please note that since all course papers are to be submitted via Blackboard’s Turnitin function, they will be scanned for originality, which would reveal whether material has been plagiarized from other print sources, including books, journals, and websites (including Wikipedia). If you have any questions about proper citation of sources, please let me know.

**Accessibility**
Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: [http://www.luc.edu/sswd/](http://www.luc.edu/sswd/)

**Harassment (Bias Reporting)**
It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to
destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission of being Chicago's Jesuit Catholic University--a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/

Technology
Internet access and enrollment in LUC’s LOCUS and Blackboard systems is required for this course. I will communicate with students occasionally via the LOCUS system, which sends emails to all students enrolled in this course. All documents (including the syllabus, power point presentations, and additional texts) are posted on this course’s Blackboard page. Occasional communication using online formats may be used during the semester.

Diversity
This course addresses diversity in the profession and practice of teaching through many of its assigned readings. In addition, I as instructor will encourage class members to include notions of diversity (e.g., social class, gender, ethnicity, 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 members of our class.