



**EADM 892:
Parents and Education: Contemporary Developments & Issues
Spring, 2007
(April 27 – June 9)
Location: EDUC 1251**

Course Outline

Instructors:

Dr. Debbie Pushor

Dr. Bonnie L. Stelmach

Class Schedule :
Fridays 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Saturdays 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
(class start and end times negotiable)
Room 1251

Calendar Course Description

(Trends and Issues in Educational Administration 892.3.). Selected current trends and issues in educational administration will be analyzed in detail. Literature, research, and related developments in other areas will be examined.

Prerequisite

None

Course Focus

This course will provide opportunities to reflect on scholarship, policy, and practice, and to participate in informed discussion regarding parents' positioning in relation to and engagement with schools and education. The intent of the course is to develop an empirical and theoretical understanding of educational practice and policy aimed at engaging parents. Students will be encouraged to examine theoretical underpinnings and philosophical assumptions in the context of their own understanding and practices. As this course was developed with the school-based scholar in mind, students will be encouraged to discuss, write about, and reflect on the readings within their particular school contexts and professional experiences.

Course Objectives

- (1) To encourage students to critically reflect upon taken for granted concepts such as “parent” and “parent involvement.”
- (2) To develop students’ ability to examine professional practice from the perspective of various conceptual, metaphorical, and theoretical frameworks.
- (3) To raise students’ awareness of the range and nature of opportunities and challenges surrounding the engagement of parents in education.
- (4) To increase students’ understanding of the contemporary issues and policy trends affecting the engagement of parents in education.

Course Format

This course is designed to encourage reflection and discussion on professional/personal experiences and their connection to theoretical concepts. A seminar format involving class discussion, small group work, guest speakers, document analysis, book club time, and reflection on readings and practice will be employed. To inform students’ thinking in diverse ways, this class will incorporate contemporary fiction as a means to draw on, extend and elaborate theoretical aspects of the course. Students will be encouraged to incorporate their lived experience, research interests and curiosities, and wonders about practice into class discussions and assignments.

Proposed Order of Readings

This is a four weekend course. The weekends will be organized around the following themes:

- (1) Challenging Assumptions
- (2) Parents in Context
- (3) Parents in Educational Policy
- (4) Parents and Curriculum

Required Reading

The body of literature commonly referred to as “parent involvement” is vast and growing. Course readings were chosen to reflect broad perspectives and provide a general overview of parent engagement as a policy phenomenon and educational practice. Specific consideration was given to incorporating Canadian literature and educational policy, as well as local expertise into the course. All readings are available on PAWS, except for the novels which are available in local bookstores.

One of the following:

- Kidd, S.M. (2003). *The secret life of bees*. New York: Penguin.
Kingsolver, B. (1998). *The poisonwood Bible*. New York: HarperFlamingo.
Toews, M. (2004). *A complicated kindness*. Toronto: A.A. Knopf Canada.

Pre-Reading

Given the compact course schedule, students will be expected to read in advance materials for the April 27th and April 28th classes.

Proposed Schedule of Readings

Theme 1: Challenging Assumptions

Class 1: Friday, April 27th

Elkind, D. (1995). School and family in the postmodern world. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(1), 8-14.

Epstein, J.L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701-712.

Class 2: Saturday, April 28th

Lawson, M. (2003). School-family relations in context: Parent and teacher perceptions of parent involvement. *Urban Education*, 38(1), 77-133.

Pushor, D., & Ruitenberg, C. (with co-researchers at Princess Alexandra Community School). (2005). *Parent engagement and leadership*. [Online]. Available: http://www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/main_mcdowell/projects/research_rep/134_parent_engagement.pdf

Guest Speakers : Yves Bousquet (Principal, Fairhaven School, Saskatoon Public School Division) and Ted Amendt (Superintendent of First Nations and Metis Education, Saskatchewan Learning)

Theme 2 : Parents in Context

Class 3: Friday, May 4th

López, G.R., & Vázquez, V.A. (2006). Parental involvement in Latina/o-impacted schools in the midwest: Recognizing the role and function of home-based knowledge and practices. *Journal of School Public Relations*.

Pushor, D., & Murphy, B. (2004). Parent marginalization; marginalized parents: Creating a place for parents on the school landscape. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 50(3), 221-235.

Class 4: Saturday, May 5th

Due: Book Club Personal Reflection

Hirshorn, B.A. (1998). Grandparents as caregivers. In M.E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp. 200-214). Westport, CO: Greenwood Press.

Stelmach, B. (2006). High school students' perspectives on the role of parents in school improvement. *Journal of School Public Relations*, 27(1), 50-83.

Caines, P. (2005). Rethinking parental participation in educational governance: Quality matters. *Principals Online*, 1(1), 22-25. [Online]. Available: <http://www.principalsonline.com/>

Fine, M. (1993). [Ap]parent involvement: Reflections on parents, power, and urban public schools. *Teachers College Record*, 94, 682-709.

Theme 3: Parents in Educational Policy

Class 5: Friday, May 11th

Saskatchewan Learning. (2005 November). *Towards School^{Plus}. Policy directions for school community councils: Provincial response to the local accountability and partnerships panel final report*. [Online]. Available: http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/comm/minister/speeches/PolicyDirections_Nov05.pdf

Class 6: Saturday, May 12th

Due: Annotated Bibliography

Nakagawa, K. (2000). Unthreading the ties that bind: Questioning the discourse of parent involvement. *Educational Policy*, 14(4), 443-472.

Stelmach, B. (2005a). A case study of three mothers' experiences in the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement: Having a voice versus getting a hearing. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 8(2), 167-185.

Guest Speakers: Donnalee Weinmaster (School Community Councils Leader, Saskatoon Public Schools), Sarah Sun (Saskatchewan Association of School Councils)

Theme 4: Parents and Curriculum

Class 7: Saturday, June 9th

Interim Report: Examination of Issue/Challenge/Practice

Group Presentations of Novel

Moll, L.C. & Gonzalez, N. (2004). Engaging life: A funds-of-knowledge approach to multicultural education. In J. Banks (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 699 - .

Shockley, B., Michalove, B., & Allen, J. (1995). Creating parallel practices. *Engaging families: Connecting home and school literacy communities*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, pp. 18-27.

McHatton, P.A. & Shaunessy, E. (2006, November). *My child and me: Traversing the educational terrain*. TC Record, January 16, 2007, 10 pp.

Guest Speaker: Francis Robson (Parent)

Parent Knowledge: Intimate Knowing, Intimate Teaching

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation will be based on four assignments:

- (1) Book Club Midpoint Reflection (individual written assignment) Due May 5th
- (2) Annotated Bibliography (individual assignment) Due May 12th
- (3) Book Club Final Reflection & Presentation (group oral assignment) Due June 9th
- (4) Examination of Challenge/Issue/Current Practice (individual paper) Due June 18th

Details of assignments and evaluations are below.

Assignments

1. Book Club Reflections (midpoint written reflection 10%; final oral reflection and presentation 20%)

The purpose of the book club is to encourage students to extend theoretical/conceptual ideas around parents and schools through the use of fiction. Metaphorically, how can the characters, actions, ideas enable us to re-imagine or re-conceptualize how parents and teachers engage with one another and within schools? How do the messages and the underlying theme of the novel offer something to the topic of parent engagement? By using fiction in an academic setting, we hope to create possibilities for you to see the familiarity and taken-for-grantedness of the landscape of schools in new and different ways.

As a group (size of group will depend on class size), students will select one of the novels listed. Each week, class time will be allotted for groups to get together to discuss their

latest reading in the novel, and relate it to ideas discussed in class regarding the engagement of parents in education. The book club will generate two assignments:

(1) Midpoint Reflection 10% Due on May 5th

This is an individually written reflection. Students are asked to reflect on and connect the novel's content with concepts and/or theories discussed in the course. This could be written in prose (maximum 5 pages) or in another creative format.

(2) Final Group Reflection and Presentation 20% To be presented on June 9th

In the final class, groups will present a collective reflection on the novel which links it to practices, issues, or compelling questions regarding the engagement of parents in education. In this oral presentation, groups will provide an overview of the novel, but focus primarily on linking the course content, characters, etc. of the novel to parents and education. Groups will have approximately one hour to present and engage colleagues in discussion and/or activity. This assignment is designed with a high degree of flexibility, and we encourage groups to be creative and innovative with how the novel is presented and related to the course. We are really interested in having rich discussions about how popular literature can spark ideas and inform our thinking in our academic and professional lives.

2. Annotated Bibliography 30% Due on May 12th

Each student will create an annotated bibliography of five scholarly sources of literature outside of the course textbook and readings. These five sources should include a variety of refereed academic journals, books, and professional literature. For each piece, a written description and analytical/critical comment of 75-100 words will be provided. Each annotation must be formatted according to APA (5th ed.). All five sources should be chosen from the area of research the student intends to investigate for Assignment #2: Examination of Challenge/Issue/Current Practice.

3. Examination of Challenge/Issue/Current Practice 40% Due on June 18th

This written assignment will focus on an identified challenge, issue, or current practice surrounding the engagement of parents in education. Students are strongly encouraged to select an area that has professional and/or personal relevance to the contexts in which they live and work. This assignment is intended to be both research-based and reflective. In your writing we hope you will include reflections, descriptions, explanations, arguments, etcetera around the following:

- the context/setting in which the issue/challenge/practice exists (e.g. school demographics, policy shifts, etc.)
- your assumptions and beliefs regarding the engagement of parents in education
- how the challenge/issue/practice has been addressed in the past and/or is currently being addressed
- a description of the essential elements of the challenge/issue/practice as you see it and in relation to theoretical concepts discussed in the class

- which pieces of literature (class-based and from your own research) connect to the issue and help you to think about the issue differently
- how you see the issue/challenge/practice being addressed in the future
- on June 9th, be prepared to give an interim oral report on the issue/challenge/practice that you're working on—this is meant to be an informal sharing of your work and progress to date

10 -15 pages not including title page and references. Citation style: APA (5th ed.)

Academic honesty and integrity: the student's role Honesty and integrity are expected of every student in class participation, examinations, assignments, patient care and other academic work. Every student must perform his or her own work unless specifically instructed otherwise.

Respect for the dignity of others All members of the University community are expected to contribute to the development of a learning environment where ideas, values and beliefs can be discussed and received with respect and dignity.

Guidelines for Academic Conduct Approved by University Council June 17, 1999

http://www.usask.ca/university_council/reports/archives/guide_conduct.shtml

Supplementary Resources

Books:

- Berger, E.H. (2004). *Parents as partners in education: Families and schools working together* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Booth, A., & Dunn, J. (Eds.). (1996). *Family-school links: How do they affect educational outcomes?* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cairney, L. & Munsie., T.H. (1995). *Beyond tokenism: Parents as partners in literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Callison, W. (2004). *Raising test scores using parent involvement.* Lanham, MD: ScarecrowEducation.
- Christenson, S., & Sheridan, S. (2001). *Schools and families: Creating essential connections for learning.* New York: The Guilford Press.
- Crozier, G. (2000). *Parents and schools: Partners or protagonists?* Trent, UK: Trentham Books.
- de Carvalho, M.E.P. (2001). *Rethinking family-school relations: A critique of parental involvement in schooling.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Edwards, P.A., Pleasants, H.M., & Franklin, S.H. (1999). *A path to follow: Learning to listen to parents.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Epstein, J.L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Epstein, J.L., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Salinas, K., Jansorn, N., & Van Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- González, N., Moll, L.C., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Hopkins, D. (2001). *School improvement for real*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Keel, R.G., & Tymochenko, N. (2004). *An educator's guide to parental harassment*. Aurora, ON: Canada Law Book.
- Lightfoot, S.L. (1978). *Worlds apart: Relationships between families and schools*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lightfoot, S.L. (2003). *The essential conversation*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- McCaleb, S.P. (1997). *Building communities of learners: A collaboration among teachers, students, families, and community*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- McEwan, E.K. (2005). *How to deal with parents who are angry, troubled, afraid, or just plain crazy* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Olsen, G., & Fuller, M.L. (2003). *Home-school relations: Working successfully with parents and families* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Sanders, M.G., Epstein, J.L., & Connors-Tadros, L. (1999). *Family partnerships with high schools: The parents' perspective* (Report No. 32). Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.
- Sarason, S. (1995). *Parental involvement and the political principle: Why the existing governance structure of schools should be abolished*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Shockley, B., Michalove, B., & Allen, J. (1995). *Engaging families: Connecting home and school literacy communities*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Tutwiler, S.J.W. (2005). *Teachers as collaborative partners: Working with diverse families and communities*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Vincent, C. (2000). *Including parents? Education, citizenship, and parental agency*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Vincent, C. (1996). *Parents and teachers: Power and participation*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Waters, P. (2002, November). *Defining roles: The role of the parent in education today to improve performance*. Paper presented to the National Forum on Education, Accountability & Performance Improvement, Ottawa, ON. Retrieved January 11, 2005 from <http://cap.ic.gc.ca/chsptf/education/publications.htm>
- Wiseman, R. (with E. Rapoport). (2006). *Queen bee moms and kingpin dads: Dealing with the parents, teachers, coaches, and counselors who can make—or break—your child's future*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Journals:

Alberta Journal of Educational Research

British Educational Research Journal

Canadian Journal of Native Education

Canadian and International Education
Childhood Education
Curriculum Inquiry
Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education
Early Childhood Education Journal
Education Canada
Educational Leadership
Educational Policy
Education Quarterly Review
Educational Research
Educational Studies
The Elementary School Journal
Family Relations
Harvard Educational Review
High School Magazine
International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning
International Journal of Leadership in Education
International Studies in Educational Administration
International Studies in Sociology of Education
Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies
Journal of Educational Studies
Journal of Family Issues
Journal for a Just and Caring Education
Journal of Research and Development in Education
Journal of Rural Studies
Journal of School Public Relations
Journal of Teacher Education
Middle School Journal
Review of Research in Education
School Community Journal
School Effectiveness and School Improvement
Teachers College Record
Teachers and Teaching
Urban Education