

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM: from NCLB through RTT to ESSA

The central goal of this course in education policy is to help students understand the arc of school reform beginning with unprecedented federal accountability in President Bush's bipartisan *No Child Left Behind Act*; how its failures were addressed by the Obama administration in its *Race-to-the-Top* reforms and NCLB waivers; and why the U.S. House and Senate reversed course in the first reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act since 2002, by shifting almost all accountability back to the states in the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (Dec. 2015). Micro as well as macro policy perspectives will be provided through the instructors' experience with Operation Public Education (the University of Pennsylvania-based school-reform project) in leading Houston's Aldine Independent School District (the 2009 Broad Prize winner with 70,000 low-income and minority students) through the design of a new teacher evaluation system, a performance-based compensation system and related reforms based on Theodore Hershberg and Claire Robertson-Kraft, eds., *A Grand Bargain for Education Reform: New Rewards and Supports for New Accountability* (Harvard Education Press, 2009).

Course goals:

- To provide an overview of current political and policy issues in education reform at the federal, state and local level
- To review measures of teaching effectiveness, including Charlotte Danielson's "Framework for Teaching," used in many states, including Pennsylvania, for the observation portion of teacher evaluation, and the new *growth* metrics – Value-Added Models and Student Growth Percentiles – which provide empirical measures of instruction impact at the classroom and school-level
- To examine how states and school districts are combining the observation ratings (teaching inputs) and growth data (learning outputs) to create teacher evaluation systems and how they use the evaluation systems to improve the quality of classroom instruction

SESSION DATE TOPIC

SESSION	DATE	TOPIC
PART ONE INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT		
1	Aug. 30	Introduction: Course Organization, Goals and Student Views of School Reform
2	Sept. 6	A Compelling Need: the Economic and Achievement Contexts
3	13	A Changing Federal Role: Standards and Accountability
4	20	Competing Explanations for "What's Wrong?" and "How to fix our schools"
5	27	School Funding and Governance at the State and Local Level <i>Jeffrey Sultanik, Esq. Chair, Education Municipal Law Group, Fox, Rothschild, LLP</i>
6	Oct. 4	Charters and Choice: Alternatives to Create Competition in Schooling <i>Marc Mannella, CEO, KIPP Philadelphia Schools</i>
7	11	From Industrial to Professional Unionism
PART TWO BUILDING A NEW TEACHER EVALUATION SYSTEM		
8	18	Assessment in Classroom Pedagogy and System Reform
9	25	The Danielson "Framework for Teaching" for Classroom Observation
10	Nov. 1	New Empirical Metrics: Value-Added Models and Student Growth Percentiles
11	8	New Evaluation Systems: Combining Observation and Growth
12	15	Consequences of Evaluation: Compensation, Remediation and Dismissal
	22	No Class – Thanksgiving
13	29	Lessons from Aldine ISD and Prospects for Reform Nationwide
PART THREE RESEARCH REPORTS		
14	Dec. 6	Student Presentations
15	13	Student Presentations

Session 1 will review the course organization and goals and provide an introduction to the major issues that will be discussed in the course.

Session 2 will examine the major arguments for fundamental reform of the nation's schools: the pattern of mediocre performance of American students in international and domestic assessments; and the need for a more rigorous education and advanced skills to meet the demands of an information-based, high-tech and increasingly competitive global economy.

Session 3 will discuss the federal government's role in public education from the equity-based Title I in the 1965 ESEA to the standards-driven and accountability-based reforms of Pres. Bush's *No Child Left Behind*, Pres. Obama's *Race to the Top*, and the recently passed *Every Student Succeeds Act*.

Session 4 will examine different views to narrow the achievement gap and graduate students meeting high standard; reduce poverty and improve living standards for low-income Americans; focus on curricula and professional development rather standardized testing; and limit the power of teachers' unions. Later classes will consider new reward and supports based on educator accountability; including performance in the mission of teachers' unions; and introducing competition through vouchers and charters. Dr. Claire Robertson-Kraft, Ph.D. in Education Policy from GSE, will lead this class.

Session 5 will explore how public schools are funded and governed at the state and local levels through a discussion of Pennsylvania law, making use of detailed information from the state's 501 school districts.

Session 6 will consider the purpose and impact of charter schools as well as the argument for the use of vouchers to introduce choice and competition to the public schools.

Session 7 will trace the evolution of teachers' unions (both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association) and their role – friend or foe – in national and local reform efforts and examine how “professional” unionism differs from the “industrial” model now undergoing change.

Session 8 will review the strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of assessment and the purposes they serve in classroom pedagogy and system-wide reform (led by Dr. CRK).

Session 9 will describe the “Framework for Teaching” developed by Charlotte Danielson that is being used for the observation portion of teacher evaluation in upwards of a dozen states (led by Dr. CRK).

Session 10 will explain how student learning results are being expressed in terms of *growth*, the new metric at the heart of the Obama reforms; we will review the two statistical approaches now being used in states and school districts to calculate growth: Value-Added Models and Student Growth Percentiles.

Session 11 will review how different states and school districts are combining teacher ratings on the Danielson Framework (and similar “observation” frameworks) and the empirical data from the new growth metric in a single evaluation system that captures both “teaching” inputs and “learning” outputs.

Session 12 will examine the “consequences” of evaluation: a performance-based compensation system to replace the single-salary schedule driven largely by longevity, and a Peer Assistance and Review process to remediate struggling teachers and dismissing those to improve in a fair and timely fashion.

Session 13 will review what's been learned from our research in the Aldine ISD and how this compares with reforms underway elsewhere in the nation (led by Dr. CRK).

Sessions 14-15 are devoted to “Student Presentations” – in-class reports on the research projects undertaken during the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There is a weekly reading assignment, a research project and a final exam.

Weekly Question

Based on the weekly readings, students will pose (1) one question and (2) a paragraph-long rationale (not to exceed 150 words) explaining why it deserves to be among the most important issues discussed. *The question must be uploaded to Canvas 24 hours before the class.*

Research Project

The research project will consist of an in-class *oral presentation* (sessions 14-15) and a *term paper* due at the last class. Topics for all students must be approved; several examples are provided (see page 8).

Take-home exam

The exam is an open-book, take-home assignment. **It must be submitted with a bibliography no later than Nov. 21** as a typed essay, ca. 5,000-6,000 words in length. More detail will be provided in class.

Three federal education initiatives – No Child Left Behind (2002); Race-to-the-Top and NCLB Waivers (2009-2015); and ESSA (2016) – have dominated school reform efforts in this century. The purpose of this exam is to gauge your understanding of why they were adopted and what explains the changes in education policy that followed. Describe each. What did subsequent reforms seek to remedy? In short, why NCLB, why RTTT, and why ESSA? Since the last of these is just now being implemented, explain the content of the legislation and pay particular attention to the stakeholders responsible for its adoption.

Final Grade: The course grade will be based on your mid-term exam (50%) and research paper (50%); the quality of your weekly questions and your in-class contributions will influence the assignment of pluses and minuses associated with your letter grade.

REQUIRED READINGS:

BOOKS: All titles are in paperback and can be purchased at the University of Pennsylvania Book Store. Theodore Hershberg and Claire Robertson-Kraft, eds., *A Grand Bargain for Education Reform: New Rewards and Supports for New Accountability* (Harvard Education Press: August, 2009)
Thomas Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (2007).
Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* (Basic Books: 2010).
Christopher Cross, *Political Education: National Policy Comes of Age*, (Teachers College Press, 2010).
Steven Brill, *Class Warfare: Inside the Fight to Fix America's Schools* (Simon & Schuster: 2011).
Richard Rothstein, *Class and Schools: Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap*, Economic Policy Institute (2004).

WEEKLY-REQUIRED READINGS

Sept. 6 Session 2. A Compelling Need: the Economic and Achievement Contexts

Thomas Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the 21 Century* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007).
Eric Hanushek and Ludger Woessmann, "How Much Do Educational Outcomes Matter in OECD Countries?" *Economic Policy*, no. July (2011): 427-491.
Diane Ravitch, "Achievement: A Review of the Evidence," Chapter 3, pp. 59-97, *National Standards in American Education* (Brookings Institution, 1995).
Eduardo Porter, "Stubborn Skills Gap in America's Work Force," *NYT* (10-8-13)
"Comparing NAEP, TIMSS and PISA in Mathematics and Science," National Center for Education Statistics, Executive Summary, http://nces.ed.gov/timss/pdf/naep_timss_pisa_comp.pdf
The Nation's Report Card: 2015 Results Mathematics and Reading
U.S. students improving – slowly – in math and science, but still lagging internationally, Pew Research Center (Feb. 2015).

Sept. 13 Session 3. A Changing Federal Role

Christopher Cross, *Political Education: National Policy Comes of Age*, (Teachers College Press, 2003).

James E. Ryan, "The Perverse Incentives of the No Child Left Behind Act," *NYU Law Review*, July, 2004

Martin West and Paul Peterson, "No Child Left Behind?: The Politics and Practice of School Accountability," Peterson and West, eds., *The Politics and Practice of Accountability* (Brookings 2003).

Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise of Our Nation's Children, Report of the Commission on No Child Left Behind (Aspen Institute: 2007); the entire report is suggested, but read at least the Introduction and the Recommendations. Available online at

<http://www.aucd.org/docs/Aspen%20Commission%20on%20NCLB.pdf>

Hershberg, "The Case for New Standards in Education," *Education Week* (Dec. 10, 1997).

National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve. *Benchmarking for success: Ensuring U.S. students receive a world-class education*. (Washington, DC: 2008).

<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/0812BENCHMARKING.PDF>

Race-to-the-Top Program Description. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>. NCLB

"waivers" can be treated as conforming to RTTT guidelines; for additional information see:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/states-granted-waivers-no-child-left-behind-allowed-reapply-renewal-2014-and-201>

Every Student Succeeds Act, A New Education Law <http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>

Sept. 20 Session 4. Competing Arguments for Reform

Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education* (Basic Books: 2010), chapters: 1, 2, 8, 11 and the Epilogue

"Race to the Top" Purpose and Program: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>

Helen F. Ladd and Edward B. Fiske, "Class Matters. Why Won't We Admit It?" *NYT* (Dec. 11, 2011).

Alex Kotlowitz, "Are We Asking Too Much From Our Teachers?" *NYT* (9-14-13).

Richard Rothstein, *Class and Schools: Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap*, Economic Policy Institute (2004), chpts. 1, 5, Conclusion

Steven Brill, *Class Warfare: Inside the Fight to Fix America's Schools* (Simon & Schuster: 2011).

The Teaching Commission Final Report - Teaching at Risk: Progress & Potholes, The Teaching Commission, Spring 2006.

Sept. 27 Session 5. School Funding and Governance at the State & Local Level

Noel Epstein, ed., *Who's in Charge Here?: The Tangled Web of School Governance and Policy*, (Brookings Institution The Education Commission of the States, 2004), Ch. 1, "Introduction: Who Should be in Charge of Our Schools," pp.1-13; Ch. 2, "Turning Points: A History of American School Governance," pp. 14-41; Ch. 4, "Recovering from an Accident: Repairing Governance with Comparative Advantage," pp. 75-103; and Ch. 6, "Less than Meets the Eye: Standards, Testing, and Fear of Federal Control," pp. 131-163.

Michael A. Rebell, "Why Adequacy Lawsuits Matter: Adequacy lawsuits ensure education opportunity for all our kids," *Education Week*, August 11, 2004.

["Funding Gap 2005: Low-Income & Minority Students Shortchanged by Most States,"](#) (Ed Trust, 2005).

Stanford University's Center for Education Policy Analysis has several relevant studies on this topic.

Oct. 4 Session 6. Charters and Choice

- Matthew DiCarlo, "The Evidence on Charter Schools and Test Scores," *Albert Shanker Institute* (Dec. 2011) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-di-carlo/charter-schools_b_1110503.html
- Urban Charter School Study on 41 Regions*, CREDO (2015)
- Brian Gill, Timpane, Ross, and Brewer, *Rhetoric vs. Reality: What We Know and What We Need to Know about Vouchers and Charter Schools*, Research Brief, (RAND Corporation, 2001).
- Paul Tough, "What It Takes to Make a Student," *New York Times Magazine* November 26, 2006
- John Chubb and Terry Moe, "America's Public Schools: Choice Is a Panacea," *The Brookings Review* (Summer 1990).

Oct. 11 Session 7. From Industrial to Professional Unionism

- Julia Koppich and Brad Jupp, "Professional Unionism," Chapter 2 in *A Grand Bargain*.
- Steven Brill, *Class Warfare: Inside the Fight to Fix America's Schools* (Simon & Schuster: 2011).
- Jane Hanaway and Andrew Rotherham, eds., *Collective Bargaining in Education: Negotiating Change in Today's Schools*, (Harvard Education Press, 2006), Introduction, pp. 1-6; Chapter 1, "The History of Collective Bargaining among Teachers," pp.7-25; Chapter 4, "The Costs of Collective Bargaining Agreements and Related District Policies" Final Section – "Possible Remedies," pp.106-109; Chapter 5, "The Effects of Collective Bargaining on Teacher Quality," pp.111-140; Chapter 8, "The Educational Value of Democratic Voice," pp.181-201; and Concl'n, pp.257-266.
- Charles Taylor Kerchner, Julia Koppich and Joseph Weeres, *Taking Charge of Quality: How Teachers and Unions Can Revitalize Schools*, (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).
- Adam Urbanski, "Teacher Professionalism and Teacher Accountability: Toward a More Genuine Profession," *Educational Policy*, July 1998.
- Mike Antonucci, *Teachers Unions and the War Within*, Education Next.pdf
- Frank Bruni, "Toward Better Teachers," oped *New York Times*, Oct. 28, 2014
- "The War on Teacher Tenure," *Time Magazine*

Oct. 18 Session 8. Assessment: The Role and Value of Summative and Formative Assessments

- Taylor, C. (1994). Assessment for measurement or standards: The peril and promise of large-scale assessment reform. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(2) p. 231-262.
- Baker, E.L., O'Neil, H.F. & Linn, R.L. (1993). Policy and validity prospects for performance-based assessment. *American Psychologist*, 48(12). p. 1210-1218.
- Hamilton, L. (2003). Assessment as a policy tool. In Robert Floden, (Ed.) *Review of Research in Education*, 27, 25-68.
- Supovitz, J.A. (2009). Can high stakes testing leverage educational improvement? Prospects from the last decade of testing and accountability reform. *Journal of Educational Change*, 10(2), 211-227.
- Koretz, D. (2005). Alignment, high stakes and the inflation of test scores. In Uses and misuses of data for educational accountability and improvement. In Joan Herman and Edward Haertel, (Eds). *Uses and misuses of data for educational accountability and improvement*. Chicago, IL: National Society for the Study of Education. p. 99-118.
- Margaret Jorgensen, Hershberg and Robertson-Kraft, "Integrated Assessment — Summative, Formative and Assessment for Learning," Chapter 8 in *A Grand Bargain*.

Oct. 25 Session 9. Charlotte Danielson's "Framework for Teaching"

- The New Teacher Project, *The Mirage: Confronting the Hard Truth About Our Quest for Teacher Development*, (August 2015)
- Charlotte Danielson, "Teacher Evaluation — Performance Frameworks," Chapter 4.
- Thomas Toch and Robert Rothman, *Rush to Judgment: Teacher Evaluation in Public Education* (Education Sector, January 2008).
- Deborah Kenny, "Want to Ruin Teaching? Give Ratings," *NYT* (10-14-12).

Daniel Weisberg, et al., *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness* (The New Teacher Project, 2009)

<http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect.pdf>

<http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Teacher%20Eval%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

Richard F. Elmore, “Bridging the Gap Between Standards and Achievement: The Imperative for Professional Development,” (The Albert Shanker Institute, 2002).

Elizabeth Green, “Building a Better Teacher,” *New York Times Magazine* (March 2, 2010).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/07/magazine/07Teachers-t.html?pagewanted=all>

Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems: A Roadmap for Improvement, Education Commission of the States (March, 2016)

Mark Dynarski, *Teacher observations have been a waste of time and money* (Brookings Institution, 12/8/16)

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/teacher-observations-have-been-a-waste-of-time-and-money/>

Nov. 1 Session 10. New Empirical Metrics: Value-Added Models and Student Growth Percentiles

William Sanders and June Rivers, “Choosing a Value-Added Model,” Chapter 3 in Hershberg and Robertson-Kraft, eds. *A Grand Bargain*.

Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman and Jonah E. Rockoff, “The Long-Term Impacts of Teachers: Teacher Value-Added and Student Outcomes in Adulthood,” Working Paper 17699 (National Bureau of Economic Research: December 2011), <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17699>

Henry Braun, et. al., *Getting Value Out of Value-Added* (National Research Council, et. al. 2010;

<http://216.78.200.159/Documents/RandD/Other/Getting%20Value%20out%20of%20Value-Added.pdf>

“Problems with the Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers,” Eva L. Baker, et. al., (The Economic Policy Institute: 2010). http://epi.3cdn.net/724cd9a1eb91c40ff0_hwm6ij90.pdf.

Steven Glazerman, Susanna Loeb, Dan Goldhaber, Douglas Staiger, Stephen Raudenbush, and Grover Whitehurst, *Evaluating Teachers: The Important Role of Value-Added*, The Brookings Brown Center Task Group on Teacher Quality (November, 2010)

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2010/1117_evaluating_teachers.aspx

Student Growth Percentiles: see Learning Growth Networks’ Webinars on SGPs

FAQs on SPGs from the Aldine Independent School District

Nov. 8 Session 11. New Evaluation Systems: Combining Observation and Growth

Hershberg and Robertson-Kraft, “Overview of the OPE Framework,” Chapter 1, *A Grand Bargain*.

INVEST Manual

MET (Measures of Effective Teaching) Project Reports. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Research Paper: *Learning about Teaching Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project* (Nov. 2010)

http://www.metproject.org/downloads/Preliminary_Findings-Research_Paper.pdf

Policy and Practice Brief: *Gathering Feedback for Teaching: Combining High-Quality Observations with Student Surveys and Achievement Gains* (Jan, 2012)

http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Practioner_Brief.pdf

Research Paper: *Gathering Feedback for Teaching: Combining High-Quality Observations with Student Surveys and Achievement Gains* (Jan, 2012)

http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Research_Paper.pdf

Patrick McGuinn, *The State of Teacher Evaluation Reform: State Education Agency Capacity and the Implementation of New Teacher-Evaluation Systems*, Center for American Progress, 2012.

Nov. 15 Session 12. Consequences of Evaluation: Compensation, Remediation and Dismissal

In *A Grand Bargain*: Marc J. Wallace, Jr., "Compensation," Chapter 6.

Virginia Adams Simon, "Compensating Educators in the Absence of Value-Added Assessment," Chpt 7.

John Grossman and Robertson-Kraft, "Peer Assistance and Review and Mandatory Remediation," Chapter 12.

Richard Elmore, "Building a New Structure for School Leadership," (Albert Shanker Institute Review, Winter 2000).

McCaffery, Daniel, Bing Han, and J.R. Lockwood. "From Data to Bonuses: A Case Study of the Issues Related to Awarding Teachers Pay on the Basis of Their Students' Progress." "Performance Incentives: Their Growing Impact on American K-12 Education, National Center on Performance Incentives." Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. 29 Feb. 2008.

Michael J. Podgursky and Matthew G. Springer, *Teacher Performance Pay: A Review* (National Center on Performance Incentives [NCPI], November 2006).

SHORTCHANGED: The Hidden Costs of Lockstep Teacher Pay, The New Teacher Project (2014).

New Teacher Pay Structures: The Compensation Side of the Strategic Management Of Human Capital, Allan Odden, CPRE (2008)

Nov. 29 Session 13. Prospects for Reform Nationwide

Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures of Effective Teaching: Culminating Findings from the MET Project's Three-Year Study (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: Jan. 2013).

Raising the Bar: Aligning and Elevating Teacher Preparation and the Teaching Profession (American Federation of Teachers 2012). A Report of the AFT Teacher Preparation Task Force.

Kathryn M. Doherty and Sandi Jacobs, *State of the States 2013. Connect the Dots: Using evaluations of teacher effectiveness to inform policy and practice* (National Council for Teacher Quality)

Closing the talent gap: Attracting and Retaining Top-Third Graduates to Careers in Teaching.

An International and Market Research-Based Perspective, McKinsey & Co.

Victoria Soriano, "Reauthorizing ESEA," GSE ed policy student' PowerPoint presentation (Fall 2014)

RESEARCH TOPIC

Students will work as individuals – or in teams – to explore districts and charter networks that have been identified as highly successful in working with low-income populations. They will conduct research to complete a case study of this district/charter network that focuses in on a few key issues:

- **Talent (Cultivating Leadership):** How do high-performing districts/charter networks recruit, develop, evaluate and retain teachers and principals?
- **Data Use (Creating a Culture of Continuous Improvement):** How do high-performing districts/charter networks use data to create a culture of continuous improvement at the system and school level?
- **Structure (Providing Stability while Allowing for Innovation):** How do high-performing districts/charter networks create the systems and structures schools need to be successful? How do these systems simultaneously allow for both stability and innovation?
- **Top Schools:** 5-10 schools in each district

Below is a list of districts/charter networks for students to choose from. Students may propose additional district/charter networks for exploration from previous Broad Foundation [district](#) and [charter](#) winners.

- **Gwinnett County Public Schools.** Gwinnett County Public Schools, located in the metro Atlanta area, is the largest school system in Georgia. In 2016-17, the school district is serving more than 178,000 students. It won the 2014 Broad Prize.
- **Orange County Public Schools.** Orange County Public Schools is the 10th largest school district in the nation with 188 schools serving over 200,000 students in the greater Orlando, Florida area. It won the 2014 Broad Prize.
- **Houston Independent School District.** Houston is the largest school district in Texas, seventh largest in the US, with 287 schools serving 215,000 students. It won the 2013 Broad Prize.
- **Success Academies.** Success operates 41 schools in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx, has a student population that is 76% low-income. It won the 2017 Broad Prize.
- **IDEA Public Schools.** IDEA Public Schools is a growing network of tuition-free Pre-K to 12th grade public schools serving more than 35,000 students in 61 schools across Texas (San Antonio, Austin, and the Rio Grande Valley). It won the 2016 Broad Prize.
- **KIPP Schools.** KIPP, the Knowledge is Power Program, is a non-profit network of 209 college-preparatory, public charter schools, schools in 20 states and the District of Columbia. It won the 2014 Broad Prize.

Papers (5,000-6,000 word length limit) must also include an annotated bibliography with a short summary for each of the sources used. Research results will be presented to the class at sessions 14-15 (length of presentations will depend on the number of students enrolled). This research will be used to inform a film on urban education being created by History Making Productions.