

Sociology 419
Education Policy in the United States
T/Th 4:30-6 pm

Instructors	Andy Ribner '14 Sydney Lewis'14 Catherine Doren '13
Goals	This forum will provide students with an understanding of education policy in the United States. Based on the interest in WeSFER (Students for Education Reform) and the new Study of Education Certificate, there is a great deal of energy and interest among students interested in education. This forum will address these interests and support student activism for education reform by providing students with a strong background in education policy.
Speaker series	The course will focus on topics including standardized testing, school choice and the charter movement, teacher training, accountability and evaluation, early childhood education, parenting and community support for schools. Each Tuesday, a guest speaker will present a lecture pertaining to the week's topic. While the speaker series is open to the Wesleyan community, students enrolled in the course will be required to attend and actively participate in Q & A having completed the assigned reading.
Readings	Students will read sections of books including Diane Ravitch's <i>The Death and Life of the Great American School System</i> , as well as articles, speeches, and press releases relating to each week's lecture. Readings will be assigned Thursdays, and should be completed prior to class meetings on Tuesday.
Discussions	Class meetings on Thursdays will be limited to those students who are enrolled in the course. Each week, we will discuss the assigned reading and the information presented by Tuesday's speaker. Each student will be expected to come to class prepared and actively participate in discussion.
Assignments	Before each lecture, students will be required to submit questions based on the assigned readings. Before weekly discussion meetings, students will be required to submit a one-page reflection on the reading and lecture. At the end of the semester, each student will complete a paper recommending a reform for public education.
Grading	Students will be evaluated on 1) participation in discussion, 2) attendance, and 3) completion of assignments. Students will be allowed to miss up to two classes and one lecture reflection assignment. If students miss more than two classes or one assignment, they will not pass.

Week #	Date	Topic
1	No class	Intro to course
	9/6	
2	9/11	History of Education
	9/13	
3	9/18	Intro to Education Policy: CT Education Reform
	9/20	
4	9/25	Intro to Education Policy: Why Policy is Important to Teachers
	9/27	
5	10/2	Models of Education Reform
	10/4	
6	10/9	Teacher Training and Accountability
	10/11	
7	Fall Break	Standardized Testing (speaker Thursday)
	10/18	
8	10/23	School Choice and Charter Movement
	10/25	
9	10/30	School Choice and Charter Movement
	11/1	
10	11/6	Early childhood & parenting
	11/8	
11	11/13	Early childhood & community support
	11/15	
	Thanksgiving	
12	11/27	Fads in ed reform
	11/29	
13	12/4	Where do we go from here? (wrap-up and proposal presentations)
	12/6	

***All topics and speakers subject to change**