

EDUCATION 60: LEARNING AND EDUCATION ACROSS CULTURES**Winter 2014**

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 Raven 208
 Office hours: MWF, 11:15am-12:15pm

Meeting Times: (2) MWF, 1:45-2:50pm
 X-hour: TH, 1:00-1:50pm
 Location: Kemeny 105

Course Description

What role does culture play in human learning, development, and education? To answer this, we will first conceptualize and define “culture” and its study, and then strive to understand the processes through which our cognition, motivation, beliefs of self, socialization processes, contexts of learning, and a host of other outcomes are mediated by the tools, symbols, norms, and beliefs of groups of people across the globe. We will spend considerable time exploring the diversity of views and practices regarding learning and education across cultures, examine differences in academic systems and achievement across countries, and discuss the implications for educational policy and practice in the US.

Course Goals

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to (a) understand the pervasive influence of culture on human learning and development; (b) investigate, document, and analyze the cultural practices of small groups; (c) critically evaluate a variety of research articles that discuss the influence of culture on learning and education, and (iv) discern whether educational policies and practices that are effective in other countries can be applied in the US.

Course Readings

All the readings for this course are articles from scientific journals, and the PDFs are available on electronic reserves via Canvas.

Course Guidelines

- **Please refrain from using your cell phone in class, and use your laptop/tablet only for class purposes.** Research (and your own experience, I’m sure) suggests that use of these devices is distractive to both users and bystanders. I encourage you to use your laptop/tablet to view the readings as PDFs in class and to occasionally search for related ideas, but keep usage there.
- You are expected to submit all assignments electronically through Canvas by the dates stated on the syllabus. No hard copies, please. There is no penalty for late work, but I expect you to contact me if you need an extra day or two. **Please don’t be delinquent in submitting work.** Plan wisely.

Assignments and Grading

Assignments	Points
Participation	10
Investigating a Cultural Context	10
Reading Responses (2)	15
Discussion questions	5
Interest Paper	25
Interest Paper check-in	5
Final	30
Total	100

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	60-69

1. *Participation*

As a discussion-based course, its quality and success will depend on your preparation, attendance, and participation. To give full participation points, I look for evidence that you are actively contributing to the "life" of the classroom community.

- a. Preparation: You're expected to read all assigned materials before class and be prepared to question, discuss, and compare them in class. Thus, you're also expected to bring a (paper or electronic) copy of each reading to class.
- b. Attendance: You're expected to attend all class sessions; but, if you need to miss class for health, sports, or religious reasons, please let me know ahead of time. **NOTE: For every missed class you will need to write a short response to the readings for that day.**
- c. Participation: You're expected to pose questions, respond to one another, and generally contribute to our discussions of the readings. You have important perspectives to add. The more you ask, the more you'll learn.

2. *Investigating a Cultural Context*

How can we see culture in action? What do people do together that indicates shared culture? How do culture and learning relate? In this assignment, you will conduct a "mini-ethnography": (1) a 2–3 hour observation of people doing something together and (2) a 1000 word write-up describing and analyzing the cultural practices, joint enterprises, shared language, and explicit or implicit norms (see Wenger, 1998) that you can infer from the activity of these participants. Your observation should be a continuous account in which people are involved in some collective activity (talking, practicing, studying) that allows you access to what they say and do. Take detailed notes during your observation and as you analyze your notes, attempt to infer the meaning of their activities, the (perhaps fluid) roles they seem to take up, and the (perhaps divergent) goals they seem to be working towards. Your write-up should include

- A thorough description of the events and interactions,
- An interpretation of these through the lens of Wenger's social practice theory, and
- Connections to at least three other readings that can help explain the relationship between culture and learning.

3. *Reading Responses and Posts*

Think of each reading response as a conversation with me about the readings. For each you will need to develop a theme that relates to at least three course readings to that date and write a ~1000 word paper that synthesizes how the readings speak to this theme. Often the part that takes the longest is coming up with a theme and figuring out what you want to say about it. But doing this thinking and processing will make the information "stick" in ways that will help you recall it. It doesn't matter if I agree with your position as long as you support it. I will provide plenty of feedback in my comments.

After reading, talking, and thinking about a handful of readings we've read to date, jot down some of the ideas you think are most important. Select one on which you want to take a position. As you write, develop your theme while using

- Ideas from the readings critically to support or challenge your own position and
- Your own educational experiences and (observations of) cultural practice.

I will use these papers to assess your understanding of the readings and ideas and how you use them to address important cross-cutting themes. However, these are not the traditional "summarize what I read" papers. Instead of summarizing, you will take a position on the theme or big idea and compare it to the positions of the authors you read, as you interpret them. Using the readings critically means examining the evidence presented and the assumptions made about culture, learning, and education.

In addition to submitting your paper online, you will post a short summary of your theme and arguments to the discussion board and make a substantive comment and question on at least two classmates' post.

4. *Discussion questions*

For one class during the term, you will each pose one or two questions related to the topics of that day

for us to discuss. Think of questions that interest you, touch on the main themes and ideas of the reading(s), elucidate multiple perspectives, and are fruitful for discussion. The night before your designated class you'll (a) post your questions to Canvas along with (b) bulleted notes of your own thoughts/answers related to the discussion questions that you generate. In class, you will formally pose your discussion questions and facilitate a brief discussion.

5. *Interest Paper*

It is impossible to cover all topics related to culture and learning/education in nine weeks, and hence there will be some topics are missing from the class schedule that you wish could be tackled in class. This paper gives you the opportunity to pursue one of those topics in depth. You will choose a topic relevant to culture and learning/education that's not listed in the schedule (or you may choose a topic that is listed as long as you delve into outside readings) and write a position paper on it. You should cite at least 6 references from peer-reviewed journals (excluding assigned readings), and your paper should be 2000–3000 words.

You may discuss/brainstorm potential topics with your classmates. However, the research (i.e., finding relevant journal articles) and writing has to be individual work. On **Monday February 7** please submit a one-paragraph synopsis of your initial ideas for the paper. I'll give feedback on how to proceed.

6. *Final*

The final will be completed at home and will be composed of free response questions.

RWIT: The Student Center for Research, Writing, and Information Technology

RWIT is a free service dedicated to helping students develop more effective strategies for generating and organizing ideas, finding and evaluating research sources, and revising compositions. At RWIT, you can meet one-on-one with a tutor to discuss a paper, research project, or assignment. Whether you are brainstorming, drafting, or polishing, the tutors can provide feedback that will help improve your work. This is a wonderful service that you are lucky to have as a Dartmouth student. To make an appointment, please see:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~rwit/students/appointment.html>

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to see me privately as early as possible in the term. Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Service office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS Accommodations/Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to me. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Academic Honor Principle

You are expected to familiarize yourself with and uphold all aspects of the Academic Honor Principle. See the ORC Bulletin or <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor> for the official statement. You may not receive or provide assistance on any exam. All work must be your own and submitted only for this class. Plagiarism is the submission or presentation of work, in any form, that is not your own, without acknowledgment of the source. You must cite all sources according to the formal APA guidelines. I take the Academic Honor Principle seriously and expect you to do the same.

Extra Credit

You have the option of earning up to 2 extra points by participating in research conducted in the Education department. In order to pursue this option, you will need to create an account at <http://ed-dartmouth.sona-systems.com> using your Dartmouth email address and sign up for a study. The amount of credit points you will earn from each study will be listed when you sign up. When you complete a study, please be sure to tell the experimenter which Education course the credit(s) should be assigned to.

Course Schedule: Readings are due on days listed and are subject to change (and they will!).

Dates	Topics	Readings	Assignments due
M, 1/6	Introduction		
W, 1/8	What is Culture?	Gutierrez & Rogoff (2003) Rogoff, Chapter 1 (2003)	
F, 1/10	Studying and Understanding Culture and Learning	Henrich et al. (2010) Heath (1997) Ames & Fiske (2010)	
Influence of Culture on Cognition and Development			
M, 1/13	Culture and Cognition	Cole & Cagigas (2010) Tomasello (2000)	
W, 1/15	Culture and Perception	Kinzler et al. (2007) Nisbet & Masuda (2003)	
F, 1/17	NO CLASS: Online Discussion of Reading Responses instead		Reading Response/Post 1
W, 1/22	Culture and Attention	Correa-Chavez & Rogoff (2009)	
TH, 1/23	Culture and Memory	Rose (2001) Ross & Wang (2010)	
F, 1/24	Culture and Intelligence	Hunt (2012) Sternberg (2004)	
M, 1/27	Culture and Beliefs on Disability	Mcdermott & Varenne (1996) <i>WATCH: Sound and Fury</i>	
W, 1/29	Culture and Motivation	Plaut & Markus (2002) Nasir (2002)	
F, 1/31	NO CLASS: Online Discussion of Reading Responses instead		Reading Response/Post 2
M, 2/3	Culture and Identity	Tyler et al. (2008) Nasir & Saxe (2003)	
Language, Discourse, and Communities of Practice (In and Out of School)			
W, 2/5	Culture and Language	Ochs & Schieffelin (2006) Majid et al. (2004)	
TH, 2/6	Culture and Classroom Discourse	Phillips (1983)	
M, 2/10	Communities of Practice in Classrooms	Wenger (1998) Nolen (2007)	Interest Paper Check In (2/7)
W, 2/12	Communities of Practice in Schools	Boaler & Staples (2008) Cobb et al. (2003)	
F, 2/14	Funds of Knowledge	Kiyama (2010) Barton & Tan (2009)	
M, 2/17	Culture and Children's Scientific Ideas	Bang et al. (2007) Wee (2012)	Investigating a Cultural Context
W, 2/19	Culture and Learning Outside of School	Goodwin (1994) Nasir et al. (2006)	
F, 2/21	Culture and Family	Jung et al. (2012) Morelli et al. (2005)	
Teaching, Learning, and Education Across the World			
M, 2/24	Culture and Schooling	Cole (2005)	
W, 2/26	Education and Global Equity	Levine et al. (2001) Maynard & Greenfield (2008)	
F, 2/28	NO CLASS: Work on Interest Paper Instead		Interest Paper
M, 3/3	Culture and Math and Science Achievement	Highlights from TIMSS 2011 The Learning Curve (2012)	
W, 3/5	Culture and Math and Science Achievement	Simola (2005) Hyde & Mertz (2009)	
F, 3/7	Wrap Up		Take-home Final (3/10)

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