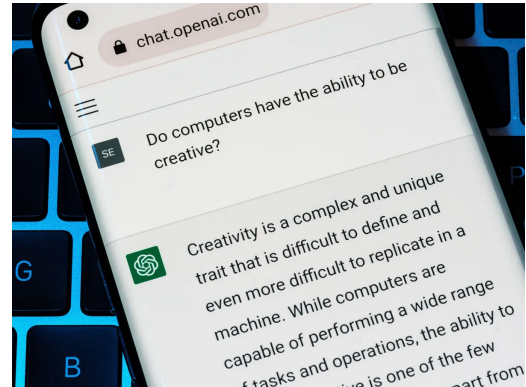


Introduction to Politics

Fordham University
POSC 1100, Fall 2023
Professor Nicholas Tampio
tampio@fordham.edu
Class: TF 11:30am-12:45 pm, Faber Hall 668
Office hours – Faber 665 TF 1-2 pm and by appointment



The United States is currently debating a host of important topics about education, including how to allocate power between the federal, state, and local governments; whether the primary purpose of schools is primarily to raise workers or citizens; whether American schools should be run like businesses; and whether America should emulate other countries' education systems, and if so, which ones. This course aims to introduce students to the academic discipline of political science by showing what it can contribute to understanding and entering these debates.

The course begins by explaining how political scientists study the institutions, interests, and ideas involved in any policy debate. Next, we survey how the subfields of political science—American politics, political theory, comparative politics, and international relations—provide insights on current political debates. In American politics, we study the transition from local to state and federal control of education, focusing particularly on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and its reauthorizations. In political theory, we consider how John Dewey laid the foundation for progressive politics that has been challenged by economists such as Milton Friedman who want to apply market principles to education. In comparative politics, we examine how scholars have studied other countries—particularly in Singapore, Finland, and India—for insights about how the US should reform its education system. And in international relations, we investigate how scholars have used economic and national security arguments to justify transforming American schools and how Yong Zhao argues that America should not emulate Asian countries with high test scores.

In the final part of the course, students research and present a report on AP credits, corporeal punishment, PTA fundraising, ChatGPT, and socio-emotional learning.

Student learning objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to successfully:

- Know the methodologies and research focus of the five main subfields of political science: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory, and public policy.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the history of American education policy, including the shifting allocation of power between local education authorities, states, and the federal government.

- Understand the normative debate about whether schools should focus on training workers or citizens.
- Place American education debates in a global context.
- Research, write about, present on, and contribute to education policy debates.

Books

- Linda Darling-Hammond, *The Flat World and Education* (Teacher's College Press 2010), ISBN-10: 0807749621
- John Dewey, *The School and Society & The Child and the Curriculum*, ISBN: 9781611044126
- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics* (Cornell University Press, 2012) ISBN-10: 0801479541

Course Requirements

(1) October 6: Before class, upload to Blackboard an electronic copy of a 3000-word encyclopedia entry on of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Write the entry with 10+ academic sources, subheadings, and formatted in the style of an academic article (see [here](#)). As an EP course, students will have a chance to revise the paper for up to a one-letter grade improvement due one week after I return the paper with comments.

(2) One week before the midterm, I will distribute 6 essay questions, and on the day of the exam we will roll a die to determine 2 questions. Good answers should incorporate material from the lectures, readings, presentations, and your own thoughts. You may study in groups, but the exam is close-booked. The exam is 1 hour.

(3, 4) Near the end of the semester, students will participate a group presentation on a controversial topic in education policy. Each student is expected to write his or her own 3000-word research paper w/ 10+ academic sources, subheadings, and formatted in the style of an academic article. For presentations, groups should make a Powerpoint that provides an overview of the history and debates on the topic. Groups should email me a few sources to distribute to students to read before class. Find activities and pose questions to spark a lively conversation.

This is a No-AI course. Students need to learn how to think and research on their own while in college. AI is a tool, but it also lets an algorithm assemble other people's words for you. I see more dangers than benefits for college students using AI.

(5) The final has the same format as the midterm.

(6) Class participation.

Grade Distribution

Encyclopedia entry on ESEA

20

Midterm	20
Research paper	20
Research presentation	10
Final exam	20
Class participation	10

To understand university policies on academic rights and responsibilities, sexual harassment, pronouns, services for students with disabilities, and other important topics, please see the [undergraduate faculty handbook](#).

Class schedule

No class on September 1. I'll be at the American Political Science Association conference in Los Angeles.

I. Introduction

1. September 5 – Introduction to the course: How did covid affect K-12 education? Who is responsible for addressing the educational consequences of the pandemic?

- Lorraine M. McDonnell, “A Political Science Perspective on Education Policy Analysis,” in *Handbook of Education Policy Research* (2009), pp. 57-70

II. American Politics

2. September 8 – American Education before 1965, Story 1

- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics*, pp. 26-39
- Horace Mann, [Twelfth Annual Report to the Secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education \(1848\)](#)
- Johann Neem, [The Founding Fathers made our schools public](#), Washington Post, August 20, 2017.

3. September 12 – American Education before 1965, Story 2

- Agustina Paglayan, “Education or Indoctrination? The Violent Origins of Public School Systems in an Era of State-Building.” 2022. *American Political Science Review*. ([pdf](#)) ([html](#)) ([appendix](#))
- Agustina Paglayan, “The Non-Democratic Roots of Mass Education: Evidence from 200 Years.” 2021. *American Political Science Review* 115(1): 179-198. ([pdf](#)) ([html including Annotations for Transparent Inquiry](#)) ([appendix](#))

4. September 15 – Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics*, pp. 26-39
- [Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965](#)

- David A. Gamson, Kathryn A. McDermott, and Douglas S. Reed, [“The Elementary and Secondary Education Act at Fifty: Aspirations, Effects, and Limitations,”](#) Russell Sage Foundation, 2015.
- Group activity: Explain Title I + Title II, III, IV, V, VI

5. September 19 – Systemic Education Reform in the 1980s and 1990s

- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics*, pp. 40-125
- [A Nation At Risk - US Department of Education](#) + [What 'A Nation At Risk' Got Wrong, And Right, About U.S. Schools](#)
- Marshall S. Smith, Jennifer O’Day, “Systemic School Reform” (1990)
- Group activity: How did the [Improving America’s School Act of 1994](#) enact systemic school reform?

6. September 22 – No Child Left Behind

- [No Child Left Behind](#)
- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics*, pp. 126-158
- Group activity: What do states have to do regarding standards, testing, and accountability to get Title I funds under NCLB?

7. September 26 – Race to the Top

- Jesse H. Rhodes, *An Education in Politics*, pp. 1-25, 159-194
- [Race to the Top Executive Summary](#)
- [What Did Race to the Top Accomplish?](#) *Education Next*, Fall 2015
- Class activity: [Watch](#) President Obama explain Race to the Top.
- Group activity: Explain how each of the four pillars of RTTT (standards and testing; data collection; charters; value-added teacher evaluations) fits into systemic school reform.

8. September 29 – Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- [The Every Student Succeeds Act: An ESSA Overview](#)
- Group activity: Study the [Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan](#). Explain what states must do regarding Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies +
 - a) Education of Migratory Children;
 - b) Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk;
 - c) Supporting Effective Instruction; English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement;
 - d) Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants; 21st Century Community Learning Centers;
 - e) Rural and Low-Income School Program; Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (McKinney-Vento Act).

9. October 3 – The Biden administration’s plans to address covid learning loss

- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/07/05/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-launches-national-effort-to-support-student-success/>

III. Political Theory

- October 6 – John Dewey on the Child and the Curriculum
 - John Dewey, “The Child and The Curriculum”
 - Group activity: develop a curriculum sequence for English Language Arts, math, history, science, art, sexual health.
 - **Encyclopedia entry on ESEA due**
- October 10 – John Dewey on School and Society
 - John Dewey, “The School and Society”
 - Group activity: Imagine that you are talking to a school board. What kind of field trips would you recommend that students take? Give a Deweyan rationale.
- October 13 – Milton Friedman on Free Market Principles in Education
 - Milton Friedman, [“The Role of Government in Education”](#)
 - What kinds of arguments do people make for school choice these days?
- October 17 – Gary Becker on Human Capital
 - Gary Becker, [“Human Capital Revisited”](#)
 - Group activity: Can you find human capital arguments for early care?
- October 20 – Charter schools
 - Deborah Meier, “Choice Can Save Public Education,” *The Nation*, March 4, 1991. https://deborahmeier.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/1991_choice.pdf
 - Frederick M. Hess, “Does School Choice ‘Work?’” *National Affairs*, 2010. <https://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/does-school-choice-work>
 - Ursula Hackett, [“Attenuated Governance: How Policymakers Insulate Private School Choice from Legal Challenge,”](#) *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 2019.
 - Group activity: What is the Biden administration doing vis-à-vis charter schools?
- October 24 – Midterm

IV. Comparative Politics

- October 27 – The Flat World Thesis
 - Thomas Friedman, [“It’s a Flat World, After All,”](#) *The New York Times Magazine*, April 3, 2005.
 - Linda Darling-Hammond, *The Flat World and Education*, Ch. 1
- October 31 – America’s Educational Inequality

- Linda Darling-Hammond, *The Flat World and Education*, Chs. 2-5
- * **Bibliography of research paper due**

18. November 3 – How Other Countries Do It, Singapore

- Linda Darling-Hammond, *The Flat World and Education*, Ch. 6, 7

19. November 7 – How Other Countries Do It: Finland

- Pasi Sahlberg, “[Education Policies for Raising Student Learning](#): The Finish Approach,” *Journal of Education Policy*, vol. 22 (2), March 2007.
- Diane Ravitch, “[How, and How Not, to Improve the Schools.](#)” *New York Review of Books*, March 22, 2012.
- Class activity: Watch Pasi Sahlberg’s [TED talk](#)
- Group activity: Make a list on the differences between GERM and the Finnish model.

20. November 10 – How Other Countries Do it: India

- Emmerich Davies, “The Lessons Private Schools Teach: Using a Field Experiment to Understand the Effects of Private Services on Political Behavior,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 2022, Vol. 0(0) 1–38

V. International Relations

21. November 14 – PISA, Economic Prosperity, and National Security

- Eric A. Hanushek, Ludger Woessman, “The Economic Benefit of Educational Reform in the European Union,” [CESifo Economic Studies](#), 58, no. 1, March 2012.
- James H. Bisbee, James R. Hollyer, B. Peter Rosendorff, and James Raymond Vreeland, “The Millennium Development Goals and Education: Accountability and Substitution in Global Assessment,” *International Organization* 73, Summer 2019, pp. 547–78
- Class activity: Watch [PISA video](#)
- Group activity: Take [online PISA tests](#)

22. November 17 – Yong Zhao on Chinese and American Education

- Yong Zhao, *World Class Learners*, Chapter 5
- Diane Ravitch, “[The Myth of Chinese Super Schools](#),” *New York Review of Books*, November 20, 2014.

Part V: Policy Debates

23. November 21 – Should colleges award AP credit?

24. November 28 – Should schools be allowed to use corporal punishment?

25. December 1 – Should local PTAs be allowed to raise more money for their own schools?

26. December 5 – Should schools ban ChatGPT?

27. December 8 – Should schools teach socio-emotional learning?

Final exam

Friday, December 15, 2023	1:30 PM	2:30 PM
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