

**EDUC 2100**  
**Education and Society**  
**Spring 2025, PittOnline Course**

**Course Instructor:**

Leigh Patel, Ph.D.  
Pronouns: she/her  
Office hours: by appointment  
Email: [lpatel@pitt.edu](mailto:lpatel@pitt.edu)

**Teaching Assistant:**

Crystal Couch, M.Ed  
Ph.D. Student and Facilitator  
Pronouns: she/her  
Office horse: by appointment  
Email: [clc317@pitt.edu](mailto:clc317@pitt.edu)

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**Core Grounding Concepts**

"The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." - Ida B. Wells

"Boogie down productions is made up of teachers  
The lecture is conducted from the mic into the speaker  
Who gets weaker? the king or the teacher  
Its not about a salary its all about reality  
Teachers teach and do the world good  
Kings just rule and most are never understood" - KRS One

"The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is raised" - James Baldwin

[PittSOE Mission and Vision](#)

Land rematriation statement, credit: Dr. Sabina Vaught

"We join one another today on the land and near the rivers originally in the care and protection of the Adena and Hopewell Nations, and the Monongahela Peoples, and shared over time by many Indigenous Nations—including the Delaware, Iroquois, and Shawnee Tribes—as a place of gathering and exchange. As a process of rematriation, we acknowledge our connection to place and honor the land as a relative."

**Course Goals, Objectives, and Themes:**

The primary goals of this course are to:

- To understand and analyze the ways in which schooling and society are intertwined
- To learn about the history of oppression and liberation in the United States, through the role of schooling
- To study the relationship between study and struggle: social movements in and for education as a civil right
- To learn from the collective projects of Freedom Schools and culturally relevant and critically sustaining education projects
- To distinguish between learning and studenting
- To develop writing as way of teaching through receiving and providing feedback with peers
- To compose a coherent biography of schooling that uses analysis and citations to interweave personal experience with research on schooling and society

**IMPORTANT COURSE REGISTRATION INFORMATION TO POTENTIAL MAT AND MEd STUDENTS**

If you are currently a) taking this course at the 1000 level, b) intend to be a student in the MAT or MEd program, and c) will need this course to earn the MAT or MEd degree (that is, the course is not a prerequisite to admission), please be aware that 1000 level courses will not be counted toward your total graduate credit hour requirement for the MAT or MEd degree. It is advised that you change the course number to the 2000 level during the drop-add period. It is also important to note that, if you are still an undergraduate student, this 2000 level course needs to be taken in your last term of undergraduate study.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

In this course, we will explore how schooling and society have been intertwined with privilege and marginalization in the United States and other regions of the world. We will also purposefully disambiguate studenting from learning. With this in mind, we will consider what it means to be a learner and growing human being in the context of a society that uses schooling primarily to stratify population-level wellness along the lines of race, class, gender, ability, and sexual identity.

To meet the aims of this course, your attendance and engagement are central. In each module, key terms/definitions and an array of meaning-making strategies will be introduced and contextualized/decontextualized. you will be asked to read and reflect upon selected texts—including journal articles, chapters from trade books, textbooks, websites, podcasts, music and music videos, films and television shows. You will also be asked to complete various assignments and tasks in and outside of class, and at times, it will be expected that you engage in online discussions with other members of the class. Because this is a PittOnline course, we won't meet at the same time each week. This means that your contributions to the weekly discussions are vital to our collective learning. You are always welcome to email us at any point during our work together.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Shalaby, C. (2017). *Troublemakers: Lessons in freedom from young children*

Other required course texts will be available through the Canvas course folder, or through direct citation to e-library.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS AND RESOURCES:**

Ewing, E. (2018). *Ghosts in the schoolyard: Racism and schooling in Chicago's South Side*. University of Chicago Press.

*Planning to Change the World: A plan book for social justice educators* 2021-2022. Available [here](#).

[www.ReThinkingSchools.org](http://www.ReThinkingSchools.org)

Social media accounts to follow: @prisonculture @diversebooks @IndianCountry

**ASSIGNMENTS****Participation 40 points**

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Ongoing

Although this course is online and asynchronous (we won't have a meeting time each week), we will still use the foundational ways that humans learn - by reading, writing, and being in dialogue with each other. We will strive to be in relation, showing respect, care, vulnerability, and growth.

Dr. Sabina Vaught refers to these principles as relational praxes. Because all learning is relational, these praxes are vital and will form the basis of how we interact with each other. Dr. Vaught details that relational praxes include:

- Studying deeply
- Contributing meaningfully to one another's learning
- Engaging generously:
  - generating possibilities
  - seeking out connection
  - deepening of understanding
  - practicing complexity over critique
- Abiding the principles of reciprocal relationality

- It is your responsibility to co-create a rigorous and productive learning environment in which you challenge one another's ideas in a scholarly manner but never insult or disparage one another.
- It is your responsibility to engage the ideas, discussions, and materials provided in this class in ways that *enhance and strengthen your own interests*.

Each module's materials will include significant education topics and societal analysis. We will use online spaces to engage in discussion, work on writing on a weekly basis, and share materials with each other. Engagement in these various formats is central for us to transcend the asynchronous nature of this course and create a learning community. Participation includes being engaged in class activities, reading and responding to assigned texts, leading and facilitating small group discussions as assigned, and completing all in-class assignments. For this class, participation also includes thinking relationally and critically about your own experiences and practices, opening those reflections up to the collective, and helping us to make the praxis happen in our respective discussion group communities. To loosen the practices of surveillance, we will assume that you, as whole human beings with full lives and responsibilities, will participate and engage with each other and us with transparency and openness. If we haven't 'heard' from you after awhile, we will reach out to first ask if you are okay and then inquire about how we can support your engagement in the course. If you feel yourself unsure, getting lost, stuck, or worried about sounding 'smart enough', let us know. We can help.

Learning Communities: We will initially place you in groups that will become your learning communities. You will find these groupings in Canvas during the first week of class. You may, within the first two weeks of the course (until January 24th) request another group for a variety of reasons. For example, you might be in a group with the same people in your program and need to listen and learn from others, or you might need the comradery that already exists with a peer.

Each group will be invited via to join their online discussion google document. This google doc is where you will, with most recent posts first, share thoughts with each other about course texts and engage in relational praxes. To get things started, we asked that the first person in each group kick off the posts for the week of January 13th. Please post and engage with others' thoughts on a weekly basis to move from a predetermined group to a learning community. We will not be surveilling or tallying how much you've posted. This helps us to interrupt the tendencies to surveil that happen so frequently in formal education that is based on control rather than care. We will be tuned in, reading, and also commenting every week, but as your instructors and as a participants who are contributing to the learning community, not to 'check' for attendance. In essence, the more you interact with each other, the more you will actively create a learning community.

### Collective Learning Journal (part of participation points)

At the close of modules one, two, and three, you will submit a collective learning journal, a collective process conceptualized by Dr. Lori Delalé-O'Connor and refined through collaboration with many co-instructors. The steps for these collective journals can be found in the assignments

portion of the Canvas site. Each collective learning journal is worth ten points, adding up to a potential of thirty points for each learning community member. This is part of your participation grade and will be marked as complete or incomplete in your learning community's discussion document.

Midpoint check-in: For us to check in with each other about engagement, mid-way through the course, you will write a short essay or create a video (or try another modality!) reflecting your learning and engagement in the course and give us feedback about how things are going and what might support you for the remainder of the course. This is a complete/incomplete assignment and does not bear any points.

**We as an emerging community need to be several things at once: trustworthy, uncomfortable, growing in skills and rigorous and generous with others and ourselves.**

### **Individual Learning Journal:** **20 points**

#### Disambiguating Learning from Schooling

Because schooling teaches us to be a student, but not always how to be learners, one of your requirements for this course is to enroll in an activity, preferably a physical activity, in which you have no prior experience. Yoga, tai chi, taking a language class, there are many online options; none of which require going to a location that might risk your and others' health. Why a physical activity? Learning is not, contrary to eurocentric theories, an activity that takes place in the brain. It is an integrated process that involves risk, making mistakes, growth, and often, alteration of how we understand ourselves and other living beings. Second, many of you may have excelled in schooling's traditions of writing papers. Learn in ways that are not home for you. Experiencing learning will make you a better teacher, less likely to seek to be the authority and more likely to listen and relate to your students. You will write one single-page, double spaced reflection about this learning and submit it via canvas.

### **Schooling and Society Narrative** **40 points**

Learning is fundamental to living and life. Schooling is integral to societies and what kinds of local/national/global beings and citizens they hope to create. As part of this course, you will, starting with the third week, and continuing throughout the course, work on one piece of writing: your [schooling and society narratives](#). This autobiography should be, by the end of the semester, a polished piece of nonfiction that teaches about schooling and learning, but does so through some well described moments in your life. It should weave in ideas from the course as you tell some portion of your experience with schooling and learning. More information about this assignment, and writing workshops, will be provided throughout the course..

First (rough, a first try) draft due 27 Jan 2021 via Canvas (no more than one page)

Final draft due by April 2021 via Canvas. Use APA style formatting for the paper and the citations of relevant research.

**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 100**

<b>90-100</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>80-89</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>70-79</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>60-69</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>59 – 0</b>	<b>F</b>

GRADING, sigh.

Grading in many ways gets in the way of learning, and I am far more interested in learning than putting a number on what possibly has been learned and unlearned. Read [this short piece](#) that deftly explains how arbitrary while also intersectionally harmful grades are. And it must be true because a mathematician wrote it, and they best know numbers, right? By the way, Bob Moses used math as a language for freedom. But, back to grading, which is far afield of freedom.

You all know how to student. You have studented your way through many years of schooling, and for some of you, this has involved a good deal of harm and miseducation. Let's get into learning, which also means unlearning. Let's aim for the strength that Prentis Hemphill says is found in the space between stability and vulnerability. Part of the rationale of co-designing our learning space is to be answerable while actively taking part in the design of how learning can take shape. That is partially why our reading/text schedule is not fully formed at the start of the semester. None of what I just described deserves to sit under the low ceiling of an arbitrary point system.

And I know you want to know how 'grading' will happen. In essence, you will either pass (A-B) or fail (anything below a B) this course. If you are in danger of failing because of lack of engagement or engaging in distracting ways of being, for example 'being the devil's advocate,' because you are evading responsibility for your arguments, you and I will talk. However, simply showing up isn't the same as 'passing,' in the many meanings that word has. To pass, in our course, means to design, to try. You need to show up, listen up, engage in design, in dedicated study, and in thoughtful argumentation, again and again. Be willing to get something wrong to learn from that wrong. Be willing to dream. Why know if it doesn't include space to dream? Seek to know and create knowledge with others for a clear purpose.

This statement on grading is heavily influenced by the intellectual work of Dr. Shanyce Campbell

**If you are experiencing home/health/food insecurity, please contact me or another person/org you trust. You are not alone.**

**Student Engagement Policy** PittSOE takes seriously the need for students to actively participate in classes; module absences and lack of participation in online discussion groups undermine the learning process, for you and for others.

That said, we are learning together during multiple pandemics: ongoing health crises, a climate change crisis, and the ongoing impacts of anti-Black racism, ableism, and heteropatriarchy. Please be in touch with either of us if you are being significantly impacted in terms of health, housing, or food insecurities. And by health, this includes our integrated selves - mind, body, soul. If you do not feel comfortable speaking with us, please contact Pitt's Disability Resource Office or the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

### **University and Course Policy regarding Academic Integrity**

As learners and teachers, we are expected to conduct ourselves and our in a professional manner that is more interested in learning than in judging, willing to learn from mistakes, and valuing relation as core to learning. The University of Pittsburgh's definition of academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism (e.g., using another's work or ideas without giving credit--intentionally or unintentionally). This policy also states that submitting your own work more than once (e.g., for this class and another class, without both instructors' knowledge and permission) is another form of academic dishonesty and will result in an F. If you are at all unsure of what constitutes plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, consult the University of Pittsburgh website for more information:

<https://www.provost.pitt.edu/faculty/academic-integrity-freedom/academic-integrity-guidelines>

**Course-specific policy:** Academic integrity includes the recognition that collective knowledge building has been foundational to community survival and social movements throughout history. Intellectual responsibility means learning critical genealogies of how knowledge systems and ideas have been built, by whom, and in what contexts. For the purpose of this course, academic integrity will align the praxes of relation described above. Unless you actively transgress these praxes, you should not expect any request of accountability for harm you may have caused. As learners, we will make mistakes, value vulnerability over shaming, and approach ourselves and each other with humility and curiosity.

### **University and Course policy for Students with Disabilities:**

**University Policy:** If you have a disability or believe you may have a disability, you can arrange for accommodations by contacting Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 951-827-4538 (voice) or [specserv@ucr.edu](mailto:specserv@ucr.edu) (email). The university's policy is that students needing academic

accommodations are required to register with SSD and provide required disability-related documentation. If you have approved accommodation(s), you are advised to notify your instructor privately.

**For our course**, in which we will be studying ableism in education, a foundational fact is that disabilities are dynamic entities. A person does not statically experience issues of access and exclusion; dis/abilities are experienced in dynamic with contexts. If your learning would benefit from accommodations but you do not have a clinician's letter, I encourage you to still communicate with me about your needs. If you do not feel comfortable speaking with me, please contact the [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#).

*Any student who faces challenges securing their food, healthcare, or housing and believes this may affect their learning in this course is urged to contact the Assistant Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide connections to resources that may be available.*