

Ethnography of Educational Organizations
Course Outline and Syllabus

This course examines how people organize themselves for teaching and learning in educational organizations around the world, formal and informal. Schools, peer groups, and street gangs and other youth groups are among the organizations analyzed. Social structures, social functions, material culture, and ideologies are identified and critiqued. The relationship between social and cultural group affiliation and individual identity is explored.

- 6-9-04 Introduction and goal setting
- 6-10-04 Schools as sociocultural organizations: Culture
Levinson, Pages 1-30
*Rabow et al.
- 6-14-04 Schools as sociocultural organizations: Social Organization
Levinson, Pages 31-40
Henry, Pages ix-67
Choice of course project
- 6-15-04 Cultures of teachers, administrators, children, and school staff
Henry, Pages 69-111
Levinson, Pages 327-343
- 6-16-04 Organizational cycles, rituals, and rites
Henry, Pages 113-160
Levinson, Pages 161-189
- 6-17-04 Formal and informal social structures and their functions in schools
Best, Pages 1-34
Levinson, Pages 53-61, 83-107
- 6-18-04 Authority, privilege, and status differentiations and hierarchies
Best, Pages 35-62
Levinson, Pages 223-247
- 6-21-04 Best, Pages 63-119
Levinson, Pages 248-279
Project overview due

- 6-22-04 Stratifications and intersections of class, race, gender, ethnicity across cultures
Best, Pages 120-141
Levinson, Pages 190-206
- 6-23-04 Best, Pages 142-159
Levinson, Pages 280-295
- 6-24-04 Community contexts of schools: public, private, parochial; rural, urban, suburban
Best, Pages 160-184
Levinson, Pages 108-122, 137-157
- 6-25-04 Stability and change in schools
Levinson, Pages 123-136, 358-368
- 6-28-04 Brent Allison on Ethnographies of Popular Culture: Anime Clubs
Levinson, Pages 344-357
- 6-29-04 Informal and nonformal educational groups
Hecht, Pages xi-69, 215-233
Levinson, Pages 207-222
- 6-30-04 Hecht, Pages 70-92
Levinson, Pages 66-82
- 7-1-04 Patterns of conflict management; hegemony and agency
Hecht, Pages 93-117
Levinson, Pages 296-313
- 7-2-04 Levinson, Pages 317-326
Hecht, Pages 118-148
- 7-6-04 Belief systems and school lore among children and adults
Hecht, Pages 149-187
Levinson, Pages 41-52
- 7-7-04 Hecht, Pages 188-214
Levinson, Pages 62-65, 369-382
- 7-8-04 **Course project due on WebCT by 5 pm**

Required Textbooks:

Best, A. (2000). Prom Night: Youth, Schools, and Popular Culture. New York, Routledge.

- Hecht, T. (1998). At Home in the Street: Street Children of Northeast Brazil. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Henry, A. (1998). Taking Back Control: African Canadian Women Teachers' Lives and Practice. Albany, NY, State University of New York Press.
- Levinson, B. A. U. (2000). Schooling the Symbolic Animal: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Education. Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield.
- *Rabow, Jerome, Michelle A. Charness, Johanna Kipperman, and Susan Radcliffe-Vasile 1994 William Fawcett Hill's Learning Through Discussion. Third ed. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage.
- *Available on reserve in Aderhold 232

Course Objectives

As a learner in this course you will read and reflect on your own practice as teacher and learner and on major texts in educational anthropology. At the end of the course you will

1. Compare and contrast two different educational organizations from different parts of the world for their social structures, functions, material cultures, and ideologies.
2. Analyze the relationship between different role and status positions in education and the cultural patterns of belief and behavior associated with those roles and statuses.
3. Describe organizational regularities in activities and events in educational institutions for their purposes, functions, and histories.
4. Examine the relationship between educational agencies and organizations and the societies they serve and the change over time in these relationships.
5. Specify how grouping of students in educational organizations and the distribution of educational certifications (diplomas and such) are related to how people are grouped as adults in society and to both social mobility and social stratification.
6. Track the emergence of a global youth culture during the 20th century and project how this may be changing formal educational systems.

Course Requirements:

1. I expect regular attendance and will take excessive absences (more than 6 hours of unexcused absences in a 3 credit-hour course) into account in the final course grade.
2. I expect people to come to class prepared and to contribute constructively to class discussions and activities. Frequent lack of preparation and either dominating or avoiding classroom contributions will also be taken into account in the final course grade. Every student will take at least two turns leading discussion on the assigned material each day, using the guidelines from William Fawcett Hill's Learning Through Discussion.
3. All students are required to use the WEBCT services that support this course.

Some course material will be available only on the course WEBCT site. We will be emailing one another for individual and group purposes using this site.

Assignments are to be submitted on the WEBCT site.

4. Course projects—see directions in subsequent section.

5. Grades will be based on the following activities:

Class attendance and participation	20
Course development	10
Project overview	20
Final course project	50
Total Points	100

Grading follows the University of Georgia policy:

100-90% = A	79-70% = C	below 60% = F
89-80% = B	69-60% = D	

Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Disabilities

University of Georgia policy is to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Please let me know if you have a disability request.

Nature of This Course

Anthropological study of culture, human nature, and human variation involves reviewing research and theories about controversial topics such as racism or human identities and abilities. People have strong feelings, values, and beliefs that affect how they interpret scientific and other scholarly information. Although diversity of opinions is central to the scholarly inquiry encouraged in this course, everyone is expected to accurately represent the variety of views discussed. We may agree to disagree, but we must be able to express the viewpoint with which we disagree. Sound scholarship depends, then, on respectful listening and sometimes respectful disagreement.

Instructor

I can be reached by telephone at 542-6489, by e-mail preferably through the WEBCT site, but also at preissle@coe.uga.edu, and in my office, Aderhold 624E, before and after classes and by appointment. Preissle is pronounced price-lee with the accent on the first syllable. I work in the social foundations of education program here at the University of Georgia as well as in the College of Education's qualitative and ethnographic research program. My degrees are an A.B. in history from Grinnell College in 1964 and an M.A. (University of Minnesota) in 1971 and an Ed.D. (Indiana University) in 1975, concentrating in anthropology and education. My scholarly interests and publications focus on sociocultural theory, gender studies, classroom social life, immigration and education, and qualitative research design. My personal interests include books,

music, gardening, birding, miniature schnauzers, and ballroom dancing.

Course Projects:

1. Course development: this is the first time this course has been offered, and my practice is to include student input into course development as much as possible. The course development project is a group assignment (pairs or larger groups) that invites students to contribute refined course objectives, activities, resources, and other ideas for the next time the course is offered. We will talk about this as we go along.
2. Course project: every student is required to submit a 10-15 page paper at the end of the term, applying concepts we have studied in the course to an analysis of one organization or human group with which you are familiar that involves teaching and learning. The group may be as informal as a peer group or as formal as a bureaucracy. Among other things you may consider the group's *social structure, function, material culture, and ideologies*. What *organizational cycles, rituals, and rites* are common in this group? What patterns of *authority, privilege, and status differentiations and hierarchies* characterize this group? What *roles and statuses* are found among members of the group? How has the group changed and remained the same over time? You are to draw on your recollections of and personal experiences with this group in describing it generally. You should compare and contrast it to at least two of the groups we have studied in the class. Be sure to replace all proper names with pseudonyms to preserve the privacy of the people in the group you are considering. If you are considering use of anything that might constitute data (e.g., documents, photographs, conversations with others), please consult with me in advance to assure that any required Institutional Review Board (IRB) clearances for human subjects research are addressed.
3. Alternative course project: if you are working on an applied project, thesis, dissertation, or other research project that is relevant to the course, and if you wish to propose an alternative to the preceding course project, please negotiate with me. Be sure that, if it involves collection of data from human beings, it is covered by IRB approval.