

**Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
College of Education
Secondary Education
Foundations of Urban Education
EDU 527 – Summer 2021**

Instructor: Dr. Amber Pabon

Location: online

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Meeting days: n/a

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Meeting Times: 5/25, 6/1, 6/8, 6/15

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Course Description

Urban schools are complex social, historical and political constructs. Historically, there have been many attempts to create, reform, eliminate, restructure and reassess urban schools. These efforts to shape urban schools reflect broader efforts to shape American society, in general, and American schools particularly. Some of the profound effects on urban schools reflect decisions that on the surface were not about education at all but about immigration, housing, zoning, health concerns, global competition, social justice initiatives and constitutional interpretation. At a deeper level these initiatives have had a profound effect on urban schooling. As a means of exploring urban schools, we will utilize a single question throughout this course: How do urban schools mirror the search for equity among all people in the United States? Utilizing this question, we will explore equity in attendance, school funding, pedagogy including tracking and de-tracking initiatives, assessment including the standardized test movement, curriculum with an emphasis on the Common Core Standards, classroom management and family involvement. The course will introduce the students to the historical, sociological, economic, and political background that has led to today's urban schools so that the student can participate as a teacher leader in urban education.

Required Texts

1. Anyon, J. (2014). *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education, and a new social movement. Second Edition.* Routledge, New York.
2. Gorski, P. & Pothini, S. (2018). *Case studies on diversity and social justice education. Second Edition.* Routledge, New York.
3. Milner, R. *Start where you are, but don't stay there: Understanding diversity, opportunity gaps, and teaching in today's classrooms. Second Edition.* Harvard Education Press.
4. Other texts as provided by the instructor on D2L.

Course Rationale

Teachers who teach in underserved schools face challenges in curriculum, instruction, assessment, classroom management and leadership that are different from those challenges faced by teachers in suburban and rural districts. This course supports those teachers and helps them prepare for the challenges of urban education.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. trace the history of the changing racial and ethnic composition of U.S. public schools.
2. articulate the involvement of the federal government in the organization of K-12 schools.
3. analyze the make-up of public school teachers.
4. describe how schools are funded in the U.S.
5. review the research on tracking by perceived ability.
6. give examples of ways that the standardized testing movement has influenced school decisions involving grouping, curriculum, funding and teacher preparation.
7. study ways schools involve families in decision-making.
8. compare and contrast classroom management strategies and consider them from a social justice perspective.
9. distinguish intention from outcome in justifying urban education practice and policy.
10. reflect on and present an interpretation of features of their own teaching and/or school-based experiences as they relate to the topics covered in the course.

Essential Questions

1. What is the typical schooling experience for students in urban schools?
2. What are the components to racism and other forms of discrimination in urban schools, including gender and social class discrimination and discrimination against non-heterosexuals?
3. How should teachers in urban schools approach their students?
4. What efforts can teachers in urban schools make to develop the dispositions and mindsets required for successful teaching? Where are you regarding these efforts?
5. What are key frameworks and specific methods that critical urban teachers will enact in their practice? How will you apply these to your specific content area?