

**UW-Madison School of Education
Wisconsin-Spencer Doctoral Research Program**

**Fall 2003 DRP Pro-Seminar
C&I 916 Sem 1 – EA 940 Sem 6**

Credits: 3
Time/Day: 12:30-2:45 pm Tuesdays (*please note– this time will be continued second semester*)
Room: 468 Teacher Education Building
Instructor: Paul Bredeson and Tom Popkewitz

Prof. Paul Bredeson Dept: Educational Administration Office: 1282-J Educational Sciences Building Phone: 262-3886 Hours: Monday and Tuesday, or by appointment E-mail: bredeson@education.wisc.edu	Prof. Tom Popkewitz Dept: Curriculum and Instruction Office: 464-B Teacher Education Building Phone: 263-7343 Hours: Monday and Tuesday 11-12, or by appointment. E-mail: popkewitz@education.wisc.edu
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I. Course Description

“A syllabus is a modern fiction imposed to provide an illusion of certainty when no such certainty exists. If a course of study is of any value, the syllabus will dissipate amidst a conversation and a structure will emerge as interests and problems shift and doubts arise.” Aristotle’s comments to Karl Marx on the eve of Foucault’s birth.” Recorded somewhere.

The course will focus on multiple disciplines to understand research in the diverse fields of education research. The first semester is concerned with thinking about the activity of research that crosses individual specialties and disciplines. Our purpose is to engage in a dialogue about the historical methodologies and philosophical assumptions through which educational research is formed and what such assumptions ‘say’ in the day-to-day practices of educational inquiry. As such, part of the class conversation will focus on the social and cultural as well as epistemological principles that overlap in ordering research. These conversations will provide a “background” to the second semester that will focus more directly on your actual research projects. (We will discuss this relationship more in the class). While we are always available to talk about the specific research problems that you are interested in, the concrete development of questions, the choice of methods, the selection of concepts or theories, and the options of data collection and interpretation techniques are ones that are to be worked on with your major advisor.

II. Requirements, Administrative Detail, and Grading

1. Class participation. The class will work as a seminar in which the reading will provide a way to organize the discussion around central issues in educational reform. In addition to general participation, students will be asked to organize and guide discussions to focus on the central issues and ideas drawn from the daily readings.
 - a. We will try to organize two readings from the reserves each week. One is reflections about methodological/philosophical/historical issues in research. A second is an article that

provides an exemplar of discussions of educational research. The former will be designated (see syllabus for first four assignments); the latter is selected by the student. That is, every student reads the same methodological/philosophical/historical readings but chooses the research article that best fits their interests and compatibility with the designated readings.

- b. Class discussion will focus on understanding research methods by applying the principles of the methodological/philosophical/historical readings to the research report. Students should be prepared to give a 10-minute analysis of the research reported in the article they selected from the perspective of what was learned from the methodological/philosophical/historical readings. Students should concentrate on the questions and concepts posed in the common readings to ask the questions, such as: What are the social, historical, philosophical, or technical assumptions of the research method used? How do these assumptions inform what is made into a problem of educational research? Is the research method sufficient to provide useful information that meets the implicit or explicit purposes of the research? Are the conclusions of the author justified by the method and the results?
2. Four brief papers are required during the semester. The first three papers will be relatively short – no more than two pages, single spaced (12pt). These papers will use the readings and their analytic ‘tools’ to focus on a problem of reform – either within your own academic area or related to an issue raised in the readings or class discussions. The last paper, due at the last session, is to bring together the readings across the semester to think about the issues and troubles of the ideas of reform. This last paper should be five pages.

Our purpose in organizing the class writing in this way is, we hope, obvious. Writing requires a discipline of thinking and playing with ideas that is different from merely a ‘discussion.’ Thus, the writing is to provide a conversation over the semester that enables a disciplined thought that brings the class reading into a conversation with particular issues of concern to you. We will discuss this further during the first class.

3. Grades will be determined by class participation (50%) and the papers submitted (50%).
4. There may be certain classes that need to be rescheduled. If so, the dates will be discussed in class.

SYLLABUS

1. Introduction: The Changing Terrain of Social and Educational Knowledge.
2. The Construction of Human Kinds.
Read: Hacking's Making Up People.
Guest Speaker, Anthony Brown, Making the Black Male.
3. Export and Import of "Thought": "Communities of Practice and the Practice of Making Communities."
Read: Vann & Bowker, Instrumentalizing the Truth of Practice.
4. No Child Left Behind: Or Who is Ahead and What Is It that Science Tells Us? And Who Is Consecrated to Talk about Science? Debates about Science, Power, and Change.
Read: (1) Websites: US Department of Education site for "No Child Left Behind":
<http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>
Powerpoint Presentation of the NCLB (Document):
<http://www.nclb.gov/next/overview/index.html>
Powerpoint Presentation: Big File (Lots of Graphs/Stats):
<http://www.nclb.gov/next/overview/presentation/index.html>
What the White House is Saying/Doing:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>
Legislation (Policies, Grants, Etc):
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html>
Free Publications (Order Forms for Print Docs):
<http://www.edpubs.org/webstore/Content/search.asp>
(2) Shavelson & Towne (Selected Chapters).
(3) International Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (Selected Chapters).
5. Medical Models in Research: The Case of Trial Studies (Bruce Wampold).
6. Naming the Mind: How Science Gets Its Naming Rights?
Read: Danziger, Chapters 7 & 10.
7. International Sciences of Education: Swiss and Scandinavian Research.
Read: Hofstetter, Rita, & Schneuwly, Bernard (2001). Educational Science in Switzerland. Evolution and Outlooks. Berne, Switzerland: Center for Science and Technology Studies, University of Berne.
Supplementary Reading: Rosengren & Öhngren, ed. An evaluation of Swedish research in education. Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Science.
8. The Generation of and the Veneration of Classics.
9. Ethics and Research.
10. The Role of Critique: Reviewing and Thinking about Journal Reviews.
Read: Popkewitz, The Alchemy of School Subjects: Standards-based Mathematics Education, Research, Inscriptions and the Fabrication of the Child, and reviews/editors letters from AERJ.
11. To be continued . . .

