Course Meeting Zoom link, as needed:

https://umich.zoom.us/j/96285609104 (be sure to use your UM Zoom if you have more than one)

Office hours Zoom link

For office hours, we can meet on Zoom or in my office (4116 SEB). Use this Zoom link for individual meetings:

https://umich.zoom.us/j/7346151800

Course Description

Every society devotes care, worry, and a substantial share of its limited resources in trying to shape the development of children, but there are important differences in how children enter into and experience education in different cultures. These differences are an important window on what societies value, fear, and believe about how children learn and develop, and comparing education in different societies provides a mirror on how and why we educate children as we do. This course will compare the development of children in schooling systems cross-culturally, looking at the period from preschool to college entrance selection. By comparing education in diverse societies we will identify both universal features of development and particular ways that different societies promote the development of healthy, competent adults.

The goal of the course is for students to have a better understanding of how children’s developmental needs and the experiences societies provide them interact to determine the shape of learning and development, as well as what might be done to improve the experiences of children.
Class Format

This is a discussion-oriented seminar, and everyone will be expected to read the articles assigned before the class period and to actively participate in class discussion. The seminar will also include some brief lectures and student presentations of the projects you will do.

Relation between Ed 250 & Ed 547

This course is being taught under two numbers, as an experiment. I think it will be useful for us to have students with a range of educational backgrounds and experience, particularly on the group projects. Advanced undergraduates may prefer to register for Ed 547 - please discuss this with me if you do. If you are taking Ed 547 there is one additional assignment beyond that expected for those taking Ed 250. Because of the additional paper, for grad students the listed “percentages” are out of 125 and thus 25% less, so “15% of grade” becomes 12% of grade, etc.

Requirements & due dates

Get out of jail free card

If you get busy with other work, you may turn in one (and only one) assignment up to 48 hours late without penalty.

Please note that this is separate from illness. If you’re sick or injured, please let me know, but you can assume you will have extra time or support to get through it.

Reaction Papers (15% of grade)

For each new topic, you should turn in a brief (equivalent of one page at the very most) set of comments on the readings as well as questions you would like to discuss in class, if any. The reactions and questions should be posted to the Canvas site by 9 p.m. every Wednesday before class meeting.

Reactions will be graded on a simple scale of 1-3, where “2” is a perfectably acceptable reaction paper, “3” is exceptional, and “1” represents something that could use improvement. A total of 50 points (e.g., 25 of 27 possible reaction papers with a grade of 2) will be enough for you to get full points for this part of the grade. If there are any that I think are deficient (i.e., where you get a “1” - I’ll explain why and work with you on this).

The reaction papers are useful to me in that they can help me get a sense of where the class is confused or might have misconceptions, what topics are important to you, and generally get a sense of the sense you made of the readings. If I need to look something up to respond to a question or comment, it also gives me a little time to do so.

Presentations

One thing the pandemic has taught me is that being comfortable in recording academic presentations is a skill everyone should have. For the two individual presentations, I would like you to
record your presentation and post it for the class to watch. I’ll give you more guidance on options for doing this. Then, in class, you can use 1 or 2 slides to guide a short discussion, but you should assume everyone has watched your video.

For the group presentation, I will not ask you to record it in advance, because recording in a group adds extra complications.

**Your Educational Development in Cultural Context (15% first version/ 5% presentation, 25% final version, 10% presentation)**

One of the main activities you will do is to write an educational autobiography placing your experience in the context of the ideas of this course. You’ll submit a first version that focuses on describing the significant features of your educational development, focusing on describing the facts and context of your experience. Then you’ll expand that paper to consider the extent to which readings and discussion from this course helps you to understand these experiences.

You will record a short presentation that we can watch before class, then in class you can prepare one slide that you can use to discuss highlights and answer questions.

**TIMSS video project (25% of grade for presentation)**

You will partner with one other person in the course and select topics or countries from the TIMSS database of classroom video in middle school mathematics and science. You will give a 10-15 minute presentation comparing the two.

[ED 547 only] **Your research question in global context (25% of grade)**

Take a topic of interest to you and consider it in a cross-cultural context. For example, if you were interested in the development of literacy in the United States, how is this affected by some of the features of literacy that vary cross-culturally (language features, writing systems, schooling demands and opportunities, etc.). I’ll be happy to discuss this with you. I’m looking for a 6-12 page paper that connects some of the main ideas of this course to your research topic or interest.

**Participation (5%).**

I expect everyone to actively engage in classroom discussions and come to class prepared to engage with the ideas in readings. This will reflect your contributions to classroom discussions.

**Important dates**

This table lists the due dates for the various grade activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post comments</td>
<td>Night before class by 9 p.m.</td>
<td>15% (in total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Educational Development presentation #1</td>
<td>1/20, 1/27, 2/3 in class</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Educational Development paper #1</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Educational Development presentation #2</td>
<td>4/13 in class</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

Academic Dishonesty Policy

I encourage you to work together with your colleagues and discuss your ideas both in and out of class. But it’s important that you be clear where your ideas come from. Failing to cite ideas, words, and phrases that come from other sources is something the University and the broader academic community take seriously, so please let me know if you have any questions and, when in doubt, cite.

Disabilities Policy

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodation through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Let me know if problems arise

In addition to the formal disabilities policy, if anything that comes up that might interfere with your ability to perform assignments or get the most from this class, please let me know. Many of us want to solve problems on our own, and I respect that, but the University has a great deal of resources that can help when problems come up, and it’s always easier the earlier you start.

Week 01, 01/06: Setting the context: Introduction & Overview

No readings for our first class
Week 02, 01/13: Basic ideas and the invention of childhood


Week 03, 01/20: Technology, culture, and development


Week 04, 01/27: Preschool in Three cultures project: 1980s

Tobin and colleagues’ project “Preschool in Three Cultures” provides both a unique look at preschools in China, Japan, and the U.S. in the 1980s and a methodology that has some interesting features that could be used in other contexts.

This week we’ll watch the original videos in class and use that as a way of bringing to the surface ideas about how children should be taught.


Week 05, 02/03: Preschool in Three cultures project: 2000s

Tobin and colleagues returned in 2003-2004 to the same sites they’d visited about 20 years previously. This gives us an opportunity to think about what stayed the same and what changed in each culture, as well as what that says both about societal change and enduring values.


**Week 06, 02/10: Classroom practices**


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**Week 07, 02/17: TIMSS video project**


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**Week 08, 02/24: Families, Parenting, and Self Regulation**


Week 09, 03/03: Winter Break - No class this week

Week 10, 03/10: Discuss 7 up project

7 up project: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Up_(film_series)


Week 11, 03/17: Education, Society, & the Life Course


Week 12, 03/24: School and Society - exams and selection


Week 13, 03/31: Present TIMSS project
Week 14, 04/07: Symbols & educational development


Week 15, 04/14: Presentations & Talking about the future
