

Course Description

MEDD6098 Critical Issues in Educational Reform

Course description
<p>This course examines different themes, contexts, and theories regarding educational reform from an international comparative and historical perspective. The course begins with an exploration of the concepts of policy and reform, aligned with their emergence vis à vis the development of schooling and education. This will be associated to what knowledge is, what knowledge is taught, and where and how it is taught. The main idea underlines that knowledge is not a taken-for-granted matter, but rather an interpreted and constructed phenomenon. A discussion on knowledge as a public and private good emerges to better articulate the discussion on globalisation, privatisation and choice, which have been at the forefront of educational policy and reform in the past two decades. This sets the foundations to discuss policy design and implementation, and the role of agents in both processes. Issues of educational quality, equity, efficiency, accountability, and planning will be discussed, focusing on many realities across the world.</p>
Course objectives
<p>Please refer to the course description above.</p>
Course learning outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unpack the discourses of educational reform policy and discourse• Identify, and critique key policy reforms and their impacts at the global and national level• Identify themes, trajectories and tensions in the design and implementation of reforms• Assess the pitfalls of evaluations based solely on metrics and those based on no metric Structure
Course assessment methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual discussion on Moodle• Group project and presentation• Debate peers' policy
Course content and topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does one mean by policy? Why reform? Their relation to key issues in education• What knowledge to teach...and how can it condition policymaking• Education as a good: globalization, state and privatization• Policy Design: the relevance of actors• Policy influence: the role of international organizations• Why is reform design from Mars and reform implementation from Venus?• The assessment eulogy: can you assess policy success with metrics?• A case of a successful reform: what makes it a success?
Required / recommended readings and online materials
<p>Hill, M. (2013) The public policy process, Harlow: Pearson Education – Chapter 1 “Studying the policy process”</p> <p>Tanner, J (2014) The Pitfalls of Reform – its incompatibility with actual improvement, New York: Rowan & Littlefield Education – Chapter 2: “The Paradigm of School Reform”</p> <p>Nelson, J.L., Palonsky, S., and McCarthy, M.R. (2013) Critical Issues in Education – Dialogues and Dialects, New York: McGraw-Hill – Chapter 1 “Introduction: Critical Issues and Critical Thinking”</p> <p>Rizvi, F. (2007) “Rethinking Educational Aims in an Era of Globalization” in Mason, M., and Hawkins, J.H., Changing Education: leadership, innovation and development in a globalizing Asia Pacific. Hong Kong: CERC (pp. 63-91).</p> <p>Nelson, J.L., Palonsky, S., and McCarthy, M.R. (2013) Critical Issues in Education – Dialogues and Dialects, New York: McGraw-Hill –Chapter 4 “Privatization, Commercialization, and the Business of School: Complementing or competing interests?”</p>

<p>Marginson, S. (2007) "The public/private divide in higher education: A global revision", <i>Higher Education</i>, 53: 307–333</p> <p>Arenas, A. (2005) "Decentralization of education policies in a global perspective" in J. Zajda (ed.), <i>International Handbook on Globalisation, Education and Policy Research</i>, 583-598.</p> <p>Akkari, A., and Lauwerier, T. (2015) "The education policies of international organizations: Specific differences and convergences", <i>Prospects</i>, published online DOI 10.1007/s11125-014-9332-z</p> <p>Hill, M. (2013) <i>The public policy process</i>, Harlow: Pearson Education – Chapter 11 "Implementation: an overview"</p> <p>Morris, P. (2004) "Teaching in Hong Kong: professionalization, accountability and the state", <i>Research Papers in Education</i>, 19, 1, 105-121.</p> <p>Nelson, J.L., Palonsky, S., and McCarthy, M.R. (2013) <i>Critical Issues in Education – Dialogues and Dialects</i>, New York: McGraw-Hill – Chapter 9 "The academic achievement gap: old remedies or new"</p> <p>Heitor, M.V., and Horta, H. (2014) "Democratizing higher education and access to science: the Portuguese reform 2006-2010", <i>Higher Education Policy</i>, 27, 2, 239-257.</p>
Other additional course information
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