

EDUCATION 177/277

EDUCATION OF IMMIGRANT STUDENTS: PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Winter Quarter 2004
Monday and Wednesday 1:15 to 3:05
Cubberley 313

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Office Hours: Monday 3:30 - 5:00 and by appointment
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Course Description:

This course examines the current status of immigrant students in elementary and secondary schools in the United States. The course focuses on the unique challenges that immigrant students place on educators and school administrators. Readings and class discussion are intended to put into sharp focus the issues of immigrants in U.S. schools. Particular attention is given to strategies employed by immigrant students and their parents to adjust to U.S. schools and to American culture. As part of this discussion, the psychological world of immigrant students will be of special interest since this is critical in understanding the academic attainment of these students.

The course also stresses the challenges imposed on educational agencies which must serve both native-born U.S. students and immigrants while confronted with overcrowded classrooms; limited financial resources at the local, state, and federal level; fierce controversy over “special” programs for immigrants (e.g., bilingual education, newcomer centers); the backlash seen in recent years against immigrants (e.g., California’s Propositions 187 and 229); the school reform movement and national standards; and student needs that extend beyond education (e.g., health, counseling, and social services). The legal ramifications on local educational agencies of educating immigrant students are also considered. Finally, educational policies and how these impact educators and immigrant students alike will be discussed.

The readings in the course come from a variety of sources that explore the dilemma of adult immigrants in the U.S. and the difficulties faced by their children in schools. Special attention is given the psychological dimensions of adjustment of immigrant students and their families, and the role of teachers and schools serving these students.

Required Readings:

Olsen, L. (1997). Made in America: Immigrant Students in our Public Schools. New York: The

New Press.

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Suarez-Orozco, C., & Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (2001). Children of Immigration. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Course Reader... Details to be provided in class.

Recommended Readings on Reserve in Cubberley Library:

Caplan, N., Whitmore, J., & Choy, M. (1989). The Boat People and Achievement in America: A Study of Family Life, Hard Work, and Cultural Values. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. **[Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]**

Harvard Educational Review. Special Issue: Immigration and Education. Fall 2001, Vol. 71, No. 3. **[Articles by Faulstich-Orellana; Sarroub; Louie; Lee; Rong & Brown]**

Igoa, C. (1995). The Inner World of the Immigrant Child. New York: St. Martin's Press. **[Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4]**

Journal of Social Issues. Special Issue: Immigrants and Immigration. Fall 2001, Vol. 57, No. 3. **[Articles by Boneva & Frieze; Phinney et al.; Dion & Dion; Zick et al.; Clement et al.]**

Segal, U. A. (2002). A Framework for Immigration: Asians in the United States. New York: Columbia University Press. **[Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8]**

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2001). Manufacturing Hope and Despair. New York: Teachers College Press. **[Chapters 4, 5, 7, 8]**

Suarez-Orozco, M. (1989). Central American Refugees and U.S. High Schools: A Psychosocial Study of Motivation and Achievement. Stanford: Stanford University Press. **[Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8]**

Valenzuela, A. (1999). Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring. Albany: State University of New York. **[Chapters 3, 5]**

Film: Recommended Viewing

- *Island of Hope – Island of Tears: The story of Ellis Island and the American Immigration Experience*. Guggenheim Productions, Inc.
- *Carved in Silence*. A film by Felicia Lowe.
- *El Norte (The North)*. (1983). By Gregory Nava and Anna Thomas.
- *Abandoned: The Betrayal of America's Immigrants*. Bullfrog Films

Course Requirements:

It is critical that students **complete the reading assignment** for each class and be prepared to contribute to the class discussion. Class participation will be factored into the final grade. [15% of course grade]

There will not be written examinations in the course, however, all students are required to **complete weekly written assignments**. These weekly Reflections are intended to be personal analyses of the assigned reading for the week. They are not intended to be a summary of the reading, but your critical reflection of something you find important, controversial, or troublesome in the reading. In total there will be nine (9) Reflections due in the course on the following dates: **January 12, 21, 28; February 4, 11, 18, 25; March 3, 8**. The first Reflection is due January 12 and should be a “thought” piece on your reactions to immigration to the U.S. and why people are willing to relocate to this country. The Reflections should be between 1 and 2 pages in length, word processed, and double-spaced. Longer Reflections will be accepted, but are not encouraged. [30% of course grade]

In addition to the nine (9) weekly logs all students will be required to submit a **final project report** that may take one of two forms. After a student has determined whether they want to complete Project A or B they must submit a one-to-two page proposal of their project to the instructor for approval and advice. The project proposals are due on Monday January 26. The project descriptions are provided below.

Project A: Case Study. This option consists of preparing a scholarly written account of at least one individual who entered school in the United States as an immigrant and who experienced the successes and difficulties that come with being a newcomer in an American school. The paper may be autobiographical, if applicable, or biographical and based on interviews with an informant. The target person(s) for this project must have been in an American school (elementary and/or secondary) for at least five or more years so that sufficient depth can be given to how s/he learned to accommodate to the school environment. The informant for this report should have entered school sometime after the first grade.

The themes to be covered in the interview with the informant and in the report should include when and how the individual learned English; whether s/he participated in any special programs (e.g., newcomer center, bilingual education, ESL) for immigrant students; experiences with prejudice and/or discrimination that strengthened or detracted from the person’s resolve to do well in school; school and/or cultural barriers that seemed insurmountable; relationships with teachers or other school personnel who made education meaningful and important for the informant; and, finally the role played by family members that contributed to how the informant adjusted to school and his/her success in school.

The purpose of Project A is to gather insights into how your informant adapted, either successfully or not, to a new culture, language, and school environment. Included in your

account should be a discussion of challenges to education that confronted the immigrant student (e.g., limited proficiency in English; homesickness; feelings of helplessness) and how these challenges were overcome or how the person is still in the process of resolving these challenges.

Finally, the write-up of the Report should make connections, wherever possible, with information in the readings or in class discussions.

Project B: Education or Social Service Organization. This option entails selecting a topic related to some aspect of education, social service, legal service, or mental health of immigrants that is of special interest to you and to prepare a case study report that discusses the topic in a scholarly way. The research report must include: (a) library and/or internet research with references, and relevant web pages; (b) at least two interviews with a knowledgeable informant(s) (e.g., ESL teacher, principal of a school with a large immigrant population; immigration attorney); (c) visit to an school, agency, or service center that provides a program for immigrants and families (e.g., newcomer school, immigration law center, INS official, health clinic, homeless shelter, mental health clinic). You may have some other ideas about whom to interview or a service center to visit. This should be discussed with the instructor.

The focus of this project report should be on professionals (service providers) and organization that provide educational or some other form of specialized service to an immigrant population. Reports must address real life issues facing service providers and immigrants such as: legal status of immigrants, limited financial resources, an overburdened staff, resistance to special programs for immigrants, legal mandates to service special populations, etc. The objective of the report is to learn something more about immigrants and schools than what a simple literature review offers.

Project Report Format

Reports for either Project A or B should be approximately 20 to 25 pages in length. The organization of the paper should contain the following elements: scholarly introduction with several recent key references; rationale for selecting your informant or service agency; enough detail to understand the informants positive and negative experiences with formal schooling in the U.S. or the type of service offered to immigrants and why the service is deemed important; personal quotes which convey the character of your informant(s) and their status as student or service provider; and insights into the psychological and educational implications of your research. All papers must be prepared in accordance with the APA Publication Manual (5th ed). [55% of grade]

Date, Topic and Reading Assignment

Jan. 7 *Introduction to course. Overview of Immigration Policies Past and Present*

Jan. 12 *Immigration and the Psychology of Immigrants*

Books:

- Portes & Rumbaut – Chapters 1 & 2;

- Suarez-Orozco – Introduction & Chapter 1

Handout:

- National Immigration Forum – Fact Sheets
- Dumas, Two selections from *Funny in Farsi* – “*Leffingwell Elementary School*” and “*The ‘F’ Word*”

Reflection #1: What in your opinion drives immigration to the U.S.? Why do people from all over the globe come to the U.S.?

Jan. 14 ***Developmental Perspectives in the Immigration Experience***

Reader:

- de Leon Siantz, “Factors that impact Developmental Outcomes of Immigrant Children”
- Garcia Coll, “The Psychological Experience of Immigration: A Developmental Perspective”

Jan. 19 **No Class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Jan. 21 ***Patterns of Adjustment Among Newcomers – Old and New Frames of Reference***

Book:

- Olsen – Chapter 1

Reader:

- Belozersky, “New Beginnings, Old Problems: Psychocultural frame of Reference and Family Dynamics during the Adjustment Period”
- Menjivar, “Living in Two World? Guatemalan-origin Children in the United States and Emerging Transnationalism”
- Short & Johnston, “Stress, Maternal Distress, and Children’s Adjustment Following Immigration: The Buffering Role of Social Support”

Reflection #2: What are some of the dilemmas experienced by immigrants as they settle in a new country? How is adjustment is facilitated or hindered by members of the host community and older immigrants from their same country?

Jan. 26 ***Forgetting the Home Language and Learning English, “Being American”***

Books:

- Olsen – Chapter 4; Portes & Rumbaut Chapter 6

Reader:

- Parker, “The Great School Myth: Everybody’s Grandfather Made It ... and Without Bilingual Education”
- Padilla, et. al., “The English-Only Movement: Myths, Reality, and Implications for Psychology”

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE TODAY

Jan. 28 ***Schooling as more than Academics: Racial Practices in School and Society***

Book:

- Olson – Chapters 2, 3, & 5

Reflection #3: Why are language and race such big issues in public education today? Is the education of English language learners necessarily a big problem for educators? Do you see a connection between how race is dealt with in school and issues of language in U.S. society?

Feb. 2 ***Schooling as more than Academics: Acculturation***

Book:

- Portes & Rumbaut – Chapter 3 & 4

Reader:

- Louie, “Parents’ Aspirations and Investment: The Role of Social Class in the Educational Experiences of 1.5 and Second Generation Chinese Americans

Project Proposal (1 to 2 page abstract) Due

Feb. 4 ***Schooling as more than Academics: Gender Roles and Family Dynamics***

Book:

- Olsen – Chapter 6

Reader:

- Farver, Narang, Bhadha “East Meets West: Ethnic Identity, Acculturation, and Conflict in Asian Indian Families”
- Dion & Dion, “Gender and Cultural Adaptations in Immigrant Families”
- Sarroub, “The Sojourner Experience of Yemeni American High School Students: An Ethnographic Portrait”

Reflection #4: Reflect on how you interpret gender roles as important in the acculturation process and schooling.

Feb. 9 ***Schooling as more than Academics: Parental Involvement***

Reader:

- McClelland & Chen, “Standing Up for a Son at School: Experiences of a Mexican Immigrant Mother”
- Chao, “Cultural Explanations for the Role of Parenting in the School Success of Asian-American Children”

Feb. 11 ***School Reform Movement***

Book:

- Olson – Chapters 10

Reader:

- Lucas, “Immigrant Youths and Educational Reform”
- Rong & Brown, “The Effects of Immigrant Generation and Ethnicity on Educational Attainment among Young African and Caribbean Blacks in the United States

Reflection #5: What do you make of the current school reform movement especially as it applies to immigrant students.

Feb. 16 **No Class – Presidents’ Day**

Feb. 18 ***Psychological Issues of Immigration: Identity Development***

Book:

- Suarez-Orozco – Chapter 4; Portes & Rumbaut – Chapter 7

Reader:

- Phinney et al., “Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perspective”

Reflection #6: Identity development and identity conflicts are significant issues in all adolescents. Why might these be of greater significance in immigrant youth?

PROJECT UPDATE DUE TODAY

Feb. 23 ***Psychological Issues of Immigration: Sequelae of Uprooting***

Books:

- Suarez-Orozco – Chapter 3; Portes & Rumbaut – Chapter 8

Reader:

- Padilla & Duran, “The Psychological Dimension in Understanding Immigrant Students”

Feb. 25 ***Psychological Issues of Immigration: Sequelae of Uprooting [Part 2]***

Book:

- Suarez-Orozco – Chapter 2;

Reader:

- Lee, “More Than ‘Model Minorities’ or ‘Delinquents’: A Look at Hmong American High School Students”

Reflection #7: Because of the circumstances surrounding immigration many students encounter both short term and long term psychological difficulties. How might these difficulties affect students’ learning?

March 1 ***Schooling and Achievement***

Book:

- Suarez-Orozco – Chapter 5

Reader:

- Phinney, Baumann, & Blanton, “Life Goals and Attributions for Expected Outcomes Among Adolescents from Five Ethnic Groups”

March 3 ***Schooling & Success: Educational Resilience***

Book:

- Portes & Rumbaut – Chapter 5 & 9

Reader:

- Arrellano & Padilla, “Academic Invulnerability a Select Group of Latino Students”
- Chiu & Ring, “Chinese and Vietnamese Immigrant Adolescents Under Pressure: Identifying Stressors and Interventions”

Reflection #8: Reflect on the process of immigration and the necessary adaptation to a new culture and a new school system. What are the consequences of uprooting on normal child and adolescent development and might this affect school achievement?

PROJECT UPDATE DUE TODAY

March 8 ***Schooling & Success: Barriers and Challenges***

Book:

- Olsen – Chapters 7, 8, & 9

Reader:

- Padilla & Gonzalez, “Academic Performance of Immigrant and U.S. Born Mexican Heritage Students”

Reflection #9: Why in your judgment is it that some immigrant students succeed well in school while other students with similar immigrant history and background have such difficulty in school?

March 10 ***Making the Future Brighter for Immigrant Children***

Book:

- Portes & Rumbaut – Chapter 10

Reflection #10: What did you gain from this course and how do you think this knowledge will help you in your future life work? What comments would you offer for improving the course?

Mar. 17 ***Project Reports Due by Noon***

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