

## HUNTER COLLEGE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

### Enhancing Achievement through Family and Community Relationships SPED 802 Summer 2018

#### Course Catalogue Description

This course examines the role of school, family, and community in educational policy and practice. Students will read and critique a variety of theoretical frameworks about the intersection of home, school, and community; analyze current research on the impact of family and community engagement on student learning and school improvement; and explore policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

#### Extended Description

The purpose of this course is to expose educators to the variety of issues associated with partnering with parents, families, and community organizations. Through critical examinations of theory, personal experiences, and collective knowledge, educators will learn how to engage parents, families, and community organizations and recognize the different forms of involvement. This course will highlight collaborative strategies that “share power” with parents, families, and community organizations in schools. We will use readings, group discussions, and guest speakers to integrate theory with practice.

#### Course Objectives

1. To examine beliefs and assumptions about the role of families and community in education.
2. To analyze the historical, political, and sociocultural perspectives regarding family and community roles in education.
3. To analyze research on the impact of family and community relationships on student achievement.
4. To develop understanding of the relationship of governmental policies and family and community engagement.
5. To explore current promising practices designed to promote and sustain family and community engagement in education.
6. To design an innovative, research-based practice to enhance an aspect of family and community engagement.

#### Required Texts

Auerbach, S. (Ed.). (2012). *School leadership for authentic family and community partnerships: Research perspectives for transforming practice*. New York: Routledge.

Hong, S. (2011). *A cord of three strands: A new approach to parent engagement in schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Choose one for online book club:

Campano, G., Ghiso, M. P., & Welch, B. J. (2016). *Partnering with immigrant communities: Action through literacy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gallo, S. (2017). *Mi padre: Mexican immigrant fathers and their children's education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. L. (2004). *The essential conversation: What parents and teachers can learn from each other*. New York: Ballantine Books.

### **Recommended Text**

Henderson, A. T., Mapp, K. L., Johnson, V. R., & Davies, D. (2007). *Beyond the bake sale: The essential guide to family-school partnerships*. New York: The New Press.

### **Assignments**

1. **Online Book Club** (25 points): Due Sunday, July 8, midnight.

Select one of the books listed. With your small group, plan your reading and discussion schedule. As a group you will be responsible for creating an online presentation that demonstrates your understanding of the book, highlighting areas such as theoretical constructs, methodological issues, contributions to understanding of family/community engagement, and any other ideas that your discussions generate.

It is up to your group how to “meet”: you may meet in person, through Zoom, or through a discussion board on Blackboard, Flipgrid or Padlet. It is also up to your group to decide how you would like to create and share your presentation about your book. Formats such as PowerPoint, Padlet, Flipgrid, and others would all be acceptable.

2. **Short Responses in Class and Online** (25 points): Due ongoing.

Throughout the course you will be invited to respond to readings and guest speakers as well as participate in online activities. We anticipate five activities, with up to five points for each.

3. **Family and Community Engagement Leadership Plan** (50 points): Due July 19 in class.

You will create an action plan to target an area of interest and concern in your context. As the course proceeds, you will submit drafts of the components for feedback. We will determine the dates for the drafts collaboratively.

The plan will consist of the following components:

1. Briefly describe your analysis of the existing program, policies, or resources in your school or district that impact the learning priority you have identified.
2. Explain how developing or expanding family and community engagement would enhance the student learning priority area or issue impacting it.
3. Discuss the multiple perspectives surrounding this issue. Explain how members of different groups (students, their families, their teachers, the general community) perceive this issue.
4. Based on what you have learned in class and in readings, briefly describe the obstacles you would anticipate encountering when implementing the action plan.
5. Based on what you learn in class and through research, briefly describe the resources (family, neighborhood, community) available to you as you address this issue.
6. Develop an actionable plan to address the learning priority area you have selected. Include the following components:
  - Explain how you will develop a culture of inclusiveness that shares power and decision making with key stakeholders (i.e., families, community members, teachers, and other school staff).
  - Specify best practices for addressing the learning priority area.
  - Outline your plan (include at least two distinct strategies with details of how you will implement) and how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your plan.
  - Explain how the plan is responsive to family and community engagement in the priority area.
  - Describe the role of each key stakeholder (including yourself).
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(Assignment adapted from P. Uly, University of Massachusetts, Lowell)