

A Successful Life and the Best Education in the World: The East Asian case

Section 1

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【Course Outline / Description】

This course attempts to analyse the education systems and pedagogical perspectives in East Asia from a sociological point of view. First, a historical review will be offered to delve up the origin of the understanding that success in life is connected to the accumulation of academic credentials. In the course, we will assess the diversity of theoretical approaches that shed some critical light on the perception that the best students in the world concentrate in East Asian societies. The relationship between an East Asian ethnic background and a scholastic behaviour and attitude will be thoroughly discussed. Next, the influence of family backgrounds and shadow education are considered to offer a comprehensive outlook of the outcomes of schooling and the performance in international exams in East Asia. Finally, students' psychological depression, bullying cases and suicide rates are explored to present a critical standpoint of academic achievement in East Asian societies.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

1. To review the sociological theorising on education
2. To examine the relationship among social class, gender, ethnicity and education in the Asian context.
3. To analyse how cultural and social policies are included in the curriculum in the Asian context.
4. To acknowledge the impact of social expectations on educational planning, teachers and students performance, and educational assessments in the Asian context.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Lesson 1	Introduction	Syllabus description
Lesson 2	Education in Asia a personal view	Essay writing
Lesson 3	Functionalist theories in education (1)	Parsons, T. (2007) The School Class as Social System. In J. H. Ballentine and J.Z. Spade (Eds.) Schools and Society. A Sociological Approach to Education. California: Pine Forge Press,80-85
Lesson 4	Functionalist theories in education (2)	Submission of mindmap 1
Lesson 5	Conflict theory (1)	Bourdieu, P. (2007) The Forms of Capital. In A. R. Sadovnik (Ed.) Sociology of Education. A Critical Reader. New York: Routledge, 83-95.

Lesson 6	Conflict theory (2)	Submission of mindmap 2
Lesson 7	Conflict theory (3)	Yoneyama, S. (2007) <i>The Japanese high school</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 1-58
Lesson 8	Conflict theory (4)	Submission of mindmap 3
Lesson 9	Recent theories (1)	Yoneyama, S. (2007) <i>The Japanese high school</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 61-90
Lesson 10	Recent theories (2)	Submission of mindmap 4
Lesson 11	Tracking in education (1)	Kariya and Dore (2006) <i>Japan at the Meritocracy Frontier</i> . <i>The Political Quarterly</i> 77 (1): 134-156
Lesson 12	Tracking in education (2)	Submission of mindmap 5
Lesson 13	Tracking in education (3)	Menéndez, R. (1986) <i>Stand and Deliver</i>
Lesson 14	Tracking in education (4)	Submission of mindmap 6
Lesson 15	Tracking in education (5)	Research project
Lesson 16	Tracking in education (6)	Research project evaluation
Lesson 17	Ethnicity, race and education (1)	Castro-Vázquez, G. (2009) <i>Immigrant children from Latin America at Japanese schools: Homogeneity, ethnicity, gender and language in education</i> . <i>Journal of Research in International Education</i> 8 (1): 57-80.
Lesson 18	Ethnicity, race and education (2)	Submission of mindmap 7
Lesson 19	Ethnicity, race and education (3)	Noyce, P. (2002) <i>Rabbit-Proof Fence</i>
Lesson 20	Ethnicity, race and education (4)	Submission of mindmap 8
Lesson 21	Gender and education (1)	Fujimura-Fanselow (1985) <i>Women's Participation in Higher Education in Japan</i> . <i>Comparative Education Review</i> 29 (4): 471-489
Lesson 22	Gender and education (2)	Submission of mindmap 9
Lesson 23	Gender and education (3)	Scherfig, L (2009) <i>An Education</i>
Lesson 24	Gender and education (4)	Submission of mindmap 10
Lesson 25	Social Class and education (1)	Kariya, T (2) <i>From credential society to learning capital society</i> . In Ishida, H & Slater, D <i>Social class in contemporary Japan</i> . London: Routledge 87-113
Lesson 26	Social Class and education (2)	Submission of mindmap 11

Lesson 27	Social Class and education (3)	Koreeda, H (2004) Nobody knows
Lesson 28	Social Class and education (4)	Submission of mindmap 12
Lesson 29	Social Class and education (5)	Research project
Lesson 30	Social Class and education (6)	Research project evaluation

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

Compulsory readings are available to download at the Blackboard

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Final Exam 10%

Quizzes or Midterm Exam 10%

Mindmaps 40%

Class Participation 40%

Students are required to write short essays for the final exam and quizzes, which will last for about 50 minutes

Students are expected to have read the assigned readings prior to lecture and should participate actively in class discussions. Based on the required readings, a mind-map **MUST** be produced. A total of 12 mindmaps **MUST** be handed in as indicated above.

Section 5

【Additional Information】