INSTRUCTOR: M. Najeeb Shafiq  
Associate Professor of Economics and Education

CONTACT INFO.: Phone: (412) 648-1832  
Room: 5907 Posvar Hall  
Email: mnshafiq@pitt.edu

CLASS TIME: Tuesdays 7:15-9:55 PM

CLASS LOCATION: Posvar 5405

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays & Thursdays, 1:15-2:45 PM. To make an appointment please leave an email message.

GRADUATE ASST.: Jessica Mason (jgm29@pitt.edu)

OVERVIEW

“How the practical value of studying in a right spirit and with scholarly accuracy the working of foreign systems of education is that it will result in our being better fitted to study and understand our own.”

Michael Sadler, 1900  
How Far Can We Learn Anything of Practical Value from Study of Foreign Systems of Education,”  

This introductory seminar on comparative education has two complementary goals. First, it should provide students with some of the information and concepts necessary for comparing different school systems, their contexts, and educational outcomes. Second, the seminar should help students sharpen their own research and analytic skills for independent, comparative insight about a specific education system (e.g. the American education system). If these goals are achieved, students should be able to form judgments about which aspects of a nation’s education system are unique to a particular context (e.g., to the U.S.) and which aspects represent features found generally in other schools throughout the world. This ability is important for educators who want to improve education systems anywhere through policy.

Each class, we will cover a major topic in comparative education. A class will generally consist of extensive discussions about a theoretical piece and another piece that provides
a test of the theory. Students will be exposed to quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of testing theories in comparative education. Because of this seminar’s courses emphasis on testable theories, we will not cover several well-known contributions in comparative education. We will also avoid theories and approaches that have limited applicability for policy analysis.

REQUIRED READINGS AND PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The majority of readings will be made available through CourseWeb (Blackboard) at http://courseweb.pitt.edu. Other readings will be distributed in class. Optional readings will be made available upon request.

You are strongly encouraged to log into the CourseWeb (Blackboard) web site each day prior to class to check for additional information and materials for class.

GRADING

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100 points

*Overview forms:* Each class, it is imperative that members of the class read the assigned readings in a timely (i.e., by the time class meets) and a professional or thorough fashion. Members of the class will be asked to fill out an *Overview Form* for each assigned reading prior to attending class (the form is provided by the instructor). The Form asks students to: identify the questions examined in each reading, briefly describe the fundamental ideas presented in the reading, set out the key findings of the reading, and identify shortcomings of the arguments presented. Completion of the Overview Form is a student’s ticket to attend class. This course requirement is aimed at ensuring lively and insightful discussion during meetings of the class. The Forms will be graded check plus or check minus.

*Class attendance participation:* Class participation is very important. Those who come to class regularly, punctually, and prepared (and willing) to discuss the readings will get maximum credit for class participation. Please contact the instructor if you are unable to attend class. Another component of class participation are forums on CourseWeb (Blackboard).

*Take home assignment:* The assignments will be take-home. You are free to consult your notes and articles but may not consult with your colleagues. Take-home assignments must be submitted via email to the instructor or GA. Points may be deducted for late assignments.
Final paper: The purpose of the final paper is for students to develop a research topic that can eventually evolve into a conference paper, masters thesis, or doctoral dissertation. The section titles and double-spaced page lengths are as follows:

Section I: Introduction (1 page)
Section II: Conceptual Framework/Theory (2 pages)
Section III: Background(s) of Region(s) and Education System(s) (2 pages)
Section IV: Critical Literature Review of Existing Research (6 pages that cite at least 8 articles)
Section V: Conclusion and Research Gap(s) (1 page)

ERIC (http://www.eric.ed.gov/) is an excellent source for finding relevant literature.

Final paper presentation: Using PowerPoint, students will present the essential points of their papers to their colleagues in a 10-minute presentation on the last day of class.

Grading: A: 92.5-100; A-: 87.5-92; B+: 82.5-87; B: 77.5-82; B-: 72.5-77. If the standard of an assignment or final paper does not meet minimum standards, you will be asked to submit a revised version. The highest grade for a revised assignment is B.

The letter grades should be interpreted as follows:

A Outstanding achievement.   B- Fair achievement.
A- Excellent achievement.    C+ Not wholly satisfactory achievement.
B+ Very good achievement.    C Marginal achievement.
B Good achievement           C- Unsatisfactory achievement.
F Fail

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890; (412) 383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

DEPARTMENTAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in ADMPS believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow the procedure described in the Guidelines by (1) first trying to resolve the matter with the faculty member directly; (2) then, if needed, attempting to resolve the matter
through conversations with the chair/associate chair of the department; (3) if needed, next talking to the associate dean of the school; and (4) if needed, filing a written statement of charges with the school-level academic integrity officer. [Dean Jere Gallagher is the Associate Dean and Integrity Officer.]

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

DISABILITY SERVICES

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services, call (412) 648-7890 (Voice or TTD) to schedule an appointment. The Disability Resources and Services office is located in 140 William Pitt Union on the Oakland campus.

STATEMENT ON CLASSROOM RECORDING

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.
PRELIMINARY COURSE OUTLINE

Topic 1: Introduction
Tuesday, 28 August
Review of syllabus

Student introductions


Topic 2: The Origins and Usefulness of Comparative Education
Tuesday, 4 September


**Topic 3: Human Capital Approach**
**Tuesday, 11 September**


Psacharapoulos, George and Harry Patrinos (2004). “Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update,” *Education Economics* 12, pp. 111-134. (Focus on the tables only)


**Topic 3: Social Capital**
**Tuesday, 18 September**


**Topic 4: School Quality**  
*Tuesday, 25 September*  


**Topic 5: Comparing The Roles of the 3 Capitals and School Quality**  
*Tuesday, 2 October*  


Tuesday, 9 October 2012
** No Class—Fall Break

**Topic 6: Alternative Student Outcomes**
16 October 2012


Topic 7: World Systems, Dependency, and Neocolonial Theories
23 October 2012


**Topic 9: Neo-Institutionalist Approaches**

30 October 2012


**Topic 10: Decentralization**
6 November 2012


**Topic 11: School Choice and Privatization**
13 November 2012


**Take home assignment distributed**

20 November 2012
**No Class—Thanksgiving Break**

**Topic 12: Research for Policy**

27 November 2012


Topic 13: The Future of Comparative Education
4 December 2012
** Student Presentations

** Take-home assignment due in class


Go to: http://cies.us/newsletter/may08/index_may08.htm.


