

Okayama University

2021 Spring: Introduction to Comparative Education

Institute of Global Human Resource Development

E-Learning: Eight (8) modules; One (1) Undergraduate Credit

Instructor

KAMBARA, Nobuyuki, Ph.D., Professor

SDGs Goal(s)



Contact:

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Office Hour

Wednesday 14:00 - 16:00, or by appointment

Medium Language of Instruction

English

Outline of the Course

This course is open to students from Okayama University and students from prominent partner institutions.

The purpose of this course is to review the development and major issues of comparative education. The course will emphasize theories which have grown out of the work of scholars and have influenced educational policy makers, school administrators, and educators. In each class, a major topic in comparative education will be covered. Students will be required to participate in rigorous intellectual discussions about comparative education.

In order to register this course, students must pledge not to drop out during the middle of this course without a justifiable reason, and that they have sufficient English proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking for the course assignments. A minimum score of TOEFL 500 (PBT), TOEFL 61 (iBT), or equivalent, is a must.

Objectives

This course has two goals. First, it will provide students with some of the information and concepts necessary for comparing different school systems, educational outcomes, and students' own educational contexts. Second, students should be able to form judgments about which aspects of a nation's educational system and policies are unique

to a particular context and which aspects represent features generally found in schools throughout the world.

Targeted Learning Outcomes

In the final session, students will present group research projects on topics approved by the instructor. In addition to demonstrating the ability to formulate a good researchable topic or question, gather relevant material, and present a clear and logical argument examining ideas and evidence, students should also demonstrate good knowledge of theory areas in comparative education covered in the weekly discussions. Additional short essays may be required during the semester.

Schedule

1. February 15 (Monday), 2021, Zoom meeting (17:00 ~ 19:00 JST)

Introduction

- (a) Overview of the course, syllabus, requirements, and expectations
- (b) Why study education comparatively?
- (c) Why is the study of comparative education useful for society and you?
- (d) Self-Introductions (Each student has 3 minutes.)
- (e) Japanese elementary education (a movie)
- (f) Assignment #1: Discussion in Moodle

2. February 18 (Thursday), 2021 (Asynchronous)

Modern Education System 1 (Basic Education)

- (a) Historical review of six core nations' educational development. One required reading:
William K. Cummings. 1997. "Patterns of Modern Education." In William K. Cummings & Noel F. McGinn (Eds.) *International Handbook of Education and Development* (Pp.63-86). New York: Pergamon.
- (b) Assignment #2: Discussion in Moodle

3. February 24 (Wednesday), 2021 (Asynchronous)

Modern Education System 2 (Higher Education)

- (a) Development of modern higher education in the world. One Required reading: Philippe G. Altbach, 1991, "Patterns in Higher Education Development: Towards the Year 2000." *Prospects*, Volume 21, Pp.189-203.
- (b) Study life at a university
- (c) The impact of COVID-19 on higher education
- (d) Assignment #3: Discussion regarding your university educational experience (based on the required reading) and COVID-19 in Moodle

4. March 1 (Monday), 2021 (Asynchronous)

Functionalism Perspective: Theory, Policy, and Problems

- (a) Two required readings:
"The Functionalist Perspective on Schooling," & "Functional Theory, Policy, and Problems."

In Walter Feinberg & Jonas F. Soltis (Eds.) *School and Society* (Pp.15-36). New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

(b) A movie

(c) Assignment: Essay and discussion forum #4

5. March 5 (Friday), (Asynchronous)

Marxism, Reproduction Theory and Hidden Curriculum

(a) Two required readings “Marxist Theory and Education,” & “The Hidden Curriculum Revisited.” In Walter Feinberg & Jonas F. Soltis (Eds.) *School and Society* (Pp.15-36). New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

(b) Short movies

(c) Assignment #5: Discussion in Moodle

6. March 11 (Thursday), (Asynchronous)

Student Achievement

(a) One required reading: Krisztian Szell. 2013. “ Factors Determining Student Achievement.” *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*. Vol. 3(3) 55–66

(b) A movie

(c) Assignment #6: Discussion in Moodle

7. March 17 (Wednesday), (Asynchronous)

Education and International Development

(a) One required reading: Joseph P. G. Chimombo. 2005. “Issues in Basic Education in Developing Countries: An Exploration of Policy Options for Improved Delivery.” *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, Vol.8, No.1, Pp.129-152.

(b) A movie

(c) Assignment #7: Discussion in Moodle

8. March 25 (Thursday), Zoom Meeting (19:00 – 21:00 JST)

Students’ Presentations

Wrap-up

How to Learn this Course

First of all, this is an online course that will be conducted using Moodle, the Okayama University learning management system. All students from overseas partner institutions will be provided their own individual ID and password to log in.

<https://moodle.el.okayama-u.ac.jp/>

You are expected to read all of the required articles and to actively participate in the discussion forums in Moodle.

During the first meeting, students will be divided into groups to prepare their final group presentations. Students are expected to collaborate on this presentation together. For preparation, students should communicate together through e-mail, social networking, or other means to maintain communication with other students.

Note 1: This course is a special intensive course. Although major lessons will be asynchronous, students must follow and keep current with the course schedule.

Note 2: There will be two synchronous (live) Zoom meetings. The indicated time of meetings will be based on Japan Standard Time (JST). Zoom meeting information will be provided in Moodle. All registered students must check the course and zoom meeting information at least the day before the first class meeting.

Note 3: This course is intended for four (4) Japanese, four (4) Chinese, and four (4) Korean students, in order to offer a meaningful learning experience for a blended student body. Additional students from other countries may be welcome if space is available.

Please contact the instructor immediately in case of trouble accessing Moodle or class materials.

Grading Policy

Discussion: The instructor will explicitly specify how many minimum posts each student is required to make for each discussion module in Moodle. Extra posts (beyond the minimum number of posts) will be counted as extra points toward the final grade. The instructor will provide a rubric assessment guideline concerning the quality of posts.

Final Group Presentation: The presentation topic must be agreed upon by the instructor by March 4. The instructor will provide a rubric assessment guideline concerning the quality of presentations.

Peer Evaluation: At the end of this intensive course, students must evaluate each other and how much each contributed to the group work. The instructor will provide a rubric assessment guideline.

Total Grade = Discussion (50%) + Final Group Presentation (30%) + Peer Evaluation (20%)

■ Prerequisites

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