



Boston University British Programmes
CAS SO 301
Challenge and Change in British Education
Dr John Macnicol
Elective B

Course aims and objectives: This course examines the development of educational policy in Britain, focusing on particularly controversial issues. Since the emphasis is on change in evolution in ideas and policies, the course begins with an historical and developmental approach, tracing the expansion of state educational provision over the course of the 20th century, the emergence of a debate over the concept of 'educational disadvantage' since the 1950s, the comprehensive reorganisation of secondary education in the 1960s and 1970s, the change in ideas on education in the 1980s and 1990s and New Labour's policies. This developmental approach is essential for a proper understanding of education policy, since change in this area is always slow and incremental. Subsequent teaching sessions examine key areas of current controversy: the relationship between the maintained and the private sectors; school performance, testing and the debate on standards; gender and ethnic background in affecting educational outcomes; and higher education. The course will be taught in a way that enables American students to understand the complexities of the education debate in Britain today and in the past. It is designed to analyse the evolution of education policy and therefore does not so much concentrate on classroom or pedagogic issues.

Methodology: Teaching is by lectures and class discussions. A summary, plus a detailed hand-out, will be issued in each session. These will form an important starting point for study. The course syllabus gives a bibliography from which students should read widely for class and in-depth for specific paper topics. These topics will be outlined in class.

Schedule:

1. Introduction to the course, the structure of education in Britain, the history of education 1870s-1940s
2. History of education from the 1944 Education Act to the 1960s
3. Education 1960s to the 1988 Act, the concept of educational disadvantage, comprehensivisation and the move away from formal selection
4. The 1988 Education Reform Act and after
5. New Labour and Education
6. Private Education
7. School performance and improvement, the curriculum, standards, pupil assessment, etc.
8. Gender and educational outcomes
9. Ethnic background and educational outcomes

Bibliography:

Ball, S. J. (1994) Education Reform: a critical and post-structural approach.
Buckingham: Open University Press
Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) The Ecology of Human Development. Cambridge Mass.
Harvard Univ. Press

Proctor, N. (ed.) (1990) *The Aims of Primary Education and the National*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Salisbury, J. and Delamont, S. (eds.) (1995) *Qualitative Studies in Education*. Cardiff: Cardiff University Press

Young, M. F. D. (ed.) (1971) *Knowledge and Control*. London: Macmillan

Ball, S. J. (1990) *Education, Inequality and School Reform: Values in Crisis*. Paper presented at the University of London

Dawtre, L. (ed.) (1995) *Equality and Inequality in Education Policy : a reader*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Gordon, P. et al. (1991) *Education and Policy in England in the Twentieth Century*. London: Sage

Delamont, S. (1990) *Sex Roles and the School*. 2nd ed. London: Methuen

Hammersley, M. and Woods, P. (1993) *Gender and Ethnicity in Schools : ethnographic accounts*. London: Croom Helm

Proctor, N. (ed.) (1990) *The Aims of Primary Education and the National*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Salisbury, J. and Delamont, S. (eds.) (1995) *Qualitative Studies in Education*. Cardiff: Cardiff University Press

Young, M. F. D. (ed.) (1971) *Knowledge and Control*. London: Macmillan

Ball, S. J. (1994) *Education Reform: a critical and post-structural approach*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Hargreaves, A. and Reynolds, D. (eds.) (1988) *Education Policies: Controversies and Critiques*. Lewes: Falmer

Statham, J. et al. (1989) *The Education Fact File*. 2nd Ed. London: Hodder and Stoughton

Ball, S. J. (1990) *Politics and Policy Making in Education: Explorations in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge

Silver, H. (1990) *Education, Change and the Policy Process*. London: Routledge

Supplementary readings from a variety of agencies and policy related sources.

Reynolds, D. et al. (1994) *Advances in School Effectiveness Research and Practice*. London: Pergamon

Reynolds, D. and Farrell, S. (1996) *Worlds Apart? A Review of International Studies of Educational Achievement Involving England*. London: HMSO for OFSTED

Rutter, M. et al. (1979) *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and their Effects on Children*. West Compton House: Open Books

Gray, J., Hopkins, D., Reynolds, D., Wilcox, B., Farrell, S. and Jesson, D. (1999) *Improving schools: Performance and Potential*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Hopkins, D. et al. (1994) *School Improvement in an Era of Change*. London: Cassell

Gray, J. et al. (1996) *Merging Traditions: The Future of Research on School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. London: Cassell

Mortimore, P. (1998) *The Road to Improvement: Reflections on School Effectiveness*. Lisse: Swets and Zeitlinger

Hopkins, D. and Harris, A. (1997) *Understanding the School's Capacity for Development: Growth States and Strategies*. *School Leadership and Management*, 17 (3). Pp. 401-411

Hargreaves, D. H. (1995) School Effectiveness, School Change and School Improvement: The Relevance of the Concept of Culture. School Effectiveness and School Improvement 6 (1) pp. 23-46.

Assessment: Assessment will be by one paper and a final two-hour examination. The final grade will be the average of the grades of the paper and the exam. Students will also be required to make class presentations with a printed summary. These presentations will be judged as pass/fail. No grade is awarded for class participation but students may be required to complete small class reading assignments. Attendance is mandatory.

GRADING SYSTEM

The following Boston University table explains the grading system that is used by faculty members on Boston University's British Programmes.

Grade	Honour Points	Usual%	Definition
A	4.0	93-100	Excellent
A-	3.7	89-92	
B+	3.3	85-88	
B	3.0	81-84	Good
B-	2.7	77-80	
C+	2.3	73-76	
C	2.0	69-72	Satisfactory
C-	1.7	65-68	
D	1.0	60-64	Low pass
F	0.0	Unmarked	Fail

Grading Criteria

A An exceptional grade that is only given to work that shows a consistent and outstanding level of insight and expression. This type of essay shows a rigorous and persuasive attention both to matters of detailed explication and to wider questions of evaluation. Crucially, this type of essay will also show real independence of thought expressed in fluent and well-written English.

A- A grade that is given to work that shows a commanding grasp of the central issues and also demonstrates an ability for close textual analysis combined with attention being paid to the larger implications of the analysis (whether this involves aesthetic, moral, political, or other considerations.) An appreciable degree of background reading and intelligent use of that reading is often shown at this level, and allowance is given here for the odd weak points and infelicities in phrasing

B+, B, B- This range of grades indicates descending levels of competence and thoroughness. On the whole, the B essay is less polished than the A essay, but a B+ essay will certainly still have to show commendably detailed stretches of analysis, a clear grasp of the central issues and some discussion of the implications of a student's close reading of any given text(s). Work within the B grades often shows evidence of

reading in the secondary literature (critical commentaries and background reading) but also often shows an overdependence on such sources over and against making intelligent, critical and discrete use of that reading. The sharpening and exercising of your own critical responses is the target to aim for, and, whereas many essays in the B range show a good understanding of the ground gone over in class there is less evidence here of really independent analysis and appreciation. The difference between a B+, a straight B, and a B-, typically involves the frequency of spelling mistakes, awkwardness or solecisms in expression, or clumsiness in the exposition of your analysis or argumentation.

C+,C, C- These grades indicate unsatisfactory work. Such essays may suffer from being too vague and generalised or else being excessively narrow in coverage; they may be seriously marred by errors of fact or errors of interpretation; they may involve only a crude repetition of areas covered in class without any demonstration of real intellectual engagement with the issues. The differences between a C+, a straight C, and a C- reflect the various degrees of inadequacy of organisation and presentation. Essays that are riddled with errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax, or are chaotic in argument and exposition, will fall into the lowest range.

D A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

F The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:

- *Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
- *So poorly written as to defy understanding
- *So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
- *Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
- *Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism

Boston University's code of student responsibilities

The value of any grade, credit, honour or degree received by a student presupposes that all work submitted by a student is his or her own. A student who uses or relies upon the work of others or who, except under conditions expressly permitted by the instructor, furnishes assistance to another student, violates the standards of the University. Students must insist upon academic honesty and integrity from their fellow students and must report promptly any case of alleged academic conduct. Failure to do so is a violation of this code.

Plagiarism can take many forms, including the reproduction of published material without acknowledgement, or representing work done by others as your own. This includes the increasingly common practice of purchasing and downloading work from Internet 'paper mills'. You should be extremely careful when submitting work for this course that all work is correctly sourced. Print outs of web sites that have been used in research may be required by the lecturer in cases of a grade dispute and all web site based reference material should be kept by the student until after the end of the semester.

Terms and Conditions Students are expected to attend each session and to be punctual. Leaving it to another class member to convey messages will not be acceptable. Any student, who is unable to attend a class, or take part in an assignment because of religious reasons, must give notice of the fact in advance. He/she will be required to make up for time lost. In this situation arrangements must be made with another student for class notes to be shared. Written papers must be delivered before agreed deadline, failure to hand in the paper will result in deducted marks.

Plagiarism Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities states: All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean." The value of any grade, credit, honour or degree received by a student presupposes that all work submitted by a student is his or her own. A student who uses or relies upon the work of others or who, except under conditions expressly permitted by the instructor, furnishes assistance to another student, violates the standards of the University. Students must insist upon academic honesty and integrity from their fellow students and must report promptly any case of alleged violation of academic conduct. Failure to do so is a violation of this code. Plagiarism can take many forms, including the reproduction of published material without acknowledgement, or representing work done by others as your own. This includes the increasingly common practice of purchasing and downloading work from Internet "paper mills." Students should be extremely careful when submitting work for this course that all work is correctly sourced. Print-outs of web sites that have been used in research may be required by the lecturer in cases of a grade dispute and all web site based reference material should be kept by the student until after the end of the semester.