

**Johns Hopkins University  
School of Education  
Educational Policy Practicum-Spring 2021  
ED 855 723**

**Instructor(s):** Robert Balfanz  
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**Credit Hours:** 3

**Class Times:** Wednesdays, 8:30 am - 11:30 am ET

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Course Description:** In this class students will examine how state and federal education policy is made through an exploration of contemporary educational issues and current educational policy debates and actors. The class is organized from the perspective of education policy practitioners.

**Course Learning Objectives**

<b>Course Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
<b>Learning Objectives from the Program</b>	
At the end of this course participants will be able to be a:	
<b>Content Expert</b>	<b>Assignment 1</b>
<b>Reflective Practitioner</b>	<b>Assignment 2</b>
<b>Evidence Based Decision Maker</b>	<b>Assignment 3</b>

**Required Text and Other Materials**

There will be weekly readings posted to the ed policy practicum webpage,  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/2021-education-policy-practicum/>

**Assignments**

Assignments (in addition to weekly readings and discussions)

**Assignment 1 -- Policy Post-Mortem**

To support the new Secretary of Education and educational policy making in the new administration you have been teamed with another member of the transition team and tasked to prepare a policy post-mortem on a key area of educational policy.

In a 10-12 slide presentation you are asked to provide the following information, for your assigned topic

- 1) **Key Policy Timeline** -- Identify the key federal policies and their dates of enactment between 2000 and 2020. Include a short description of what they called for and provided.
- 2) **Impact Analysis** -- A) Data tables or graphs which highlight the overall data trends for the assigned topic over the past 20 years 2000-2020. Where appropriate highlight overall levels in 2000, 2010 and 2020 (or as close to these years as available data allows), trends, and sub-group outcomes (e.g. students of color, low income students, students with disabilities etc. B) Any conclusions which can be drawn from the data on the impact of federal policies on the assigned topic over the past 20 years.

- 3) **Summary of Policy Effectiveness** -- Conclude with key points on 1) What do we know about the effectiveness of federal policies for your assigned topic over the past 20 years (this should be limited to findings for which there is solid evidence) , 2) What is the broader perception of the impact of the policies-is their general consensus?, disagreement? are either supported by the known facts? 3) What more do we need to know to understand the current and potential effectiveness of the policies identified?

***Policy Post-Mortem Topics***

- Early Learning (Pre-K and K)
- Accountability and Academic Achievement (Grades 3 to 12)
- High School Graduation Rates and Graduation Requirements
- College Readiness (advanced coursework in high school)
- College Enrollment, Cost, and Persistence
- Teachers (i.e. composition, turnover, assessment, alternative certification, professional development and learning)
- School Discipline, Safety, Climate, Attendance
- Charters and Educational Innovations

**Assignment 2 -- Op-eds**

Write a 500-word op-ed on an educational policy topic you feel strongly about. Link it to either the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NCLB or the COVID-19 moment.

**Assignment 3 -- Policy brief and presentation**

The US Department of Education Deputy Secretary for Policy and Planning has asked you to draft a policy brief. Select one of the topics explored in the Policy Post-Mortem. In a five- to seven-page policy brief and supporting five to seven slide power point make the case for what the key next step in federal education policy is to advance outcomes in your selected area. Make the case for how the policy will help the nation. Indicate how it will improve upon the prior 20 years of educational policy making and outcomes in this area and how it is responsive to the COVID-19 moment. Identify who is likely to support it and who is likely to oppose it, what the implementation challenges will be, and how both the implementation challenges and opposition can be mediated.

**Evaluation and Grading**

Attendance and participation in class discussion - (20%)

Assignment 1 - (20%)

Assignment 2 - (20%)

Assignment 3 - (40%)

***“The grades of D+, D, and D- are not awarded at the graduate level.”***

## Course Outline

### What Do We Do Now? Educational Policy Making from NCLB to the COVID-19 Moment

#### Jan 27 -- From NCLB to the COVID-19 Moment, Part 1

Intro to ourselves, intro to course and its themes, (1) 20 years of Ed Policy in 50 minutes.

##### In-Class Materials

- **15 Years After NCLB Oral History** (Video)  
<https://www.the74million.org/article/watch-the-oral-history-after-15-years-of-no-child-left-behind-the-enduring-legacy-of-the-landmark-education-legislation/>
- **Jal Mehta, COVID-19 and Schools Op-ed**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/23/opinion/covid-schools-vaccine.html>
- **Biden Administration American Rescue Plan, pp. 6-7**  
[http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/COVID\\_Relief-Package-Fact-Sheet-Public-Version.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/COVID_Relief-Package-Fact-Sheet-Public-Version.pdf)

#### Feb 3 -- From NCLB to the COVID-19 Moment, Part 2

##### Readings:

- **Sandy Kress Oral history of NCLB creation** <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Sandy-Kress-Oral-History-NCLB.pdf>
- **AEI 2004 update on NCLB** <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NCLB-2004-Piece-by-Hess.pdf>
- **Jal Mehta, Imagining September**, COVID-19 response  
[http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ImaginingSeptember\\_Storyboard\\_v3-1-1-Mehta.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ImaginingSeptember_Storyboard_v3-1-1-Mehta.pdf)
- **Biden Transition team memo** from Science of Learning and Development Coalition  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SoLD-Alliance-Memo-for-Biden-Harris-ED-12-7-20-1.pdf>
- **Open Letter to Biden administration** from Brookings Institute Next Generation Community Schools Taskforce <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/12/18/open-letter-to-the-incoming-biden-administration-on-next-generation-community-schools/>

##### In-Class Materials

- **Proposed COVID-19 Response** – Balfanz-School Success Corps, 2020  
[http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/School-Success-Corps-Concept-Paper\\_Dec.-2020.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/School-Success-Corps-Concept-Paper_Dec.-2020.pdf)

#### Feb 10 -- Follow the Evidence -- The Bumpy History of Evidence Based Policy Making

##### Readings

- **Traub New York Times piece on NCLB Evidence-Based Decision Making**  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NO-CHILD-LEFT-BEHIND-2002-NYT-Piece-on-Evidence-based-decision-making.pdf>
- **Barbash -- The Reading First Controversy**, Education Next, 2008  
<https://www.educationnext.org/the-reading-first-controversy/>
- **Balfanz- Power of Penny-Building Knowledge to Invest in What Works in Education**, Results for American, 2014 <https://results4america.org/tools/the-power-of-a-penny/>
- **Slavin -- National Tutoring Corps Proposal** <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Scaling-up-Natl-Tutoring-Corps.pdf>

- Lingenfelter, “Proof” Policy and Practice-Understanding Role of Evidence in Improving Education, pp 157-174 [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LingenfelterPaul\\_ProofPolicyPractice\\_157-174.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LingenfelterPaul_ProofPolicyPractice_157-174.pdf)

#### In-Class Materials

- Slavin -- Blog: Tutoring Could Change Everything <https://robertslavinsblog.wordpress.com/>

#### Assignments

- Policy Post-Mortem -- Two Teams present

### **Feb 17 -- Follow the Money -- Educational Resources, Inequality, and Student Outcomes**

#### Readings

- Hashim et al. “Have Income-based achievement gaps widened or narrowed?” NBER Working Paper 27714, August 2020 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Have-income-based-achievement-gaps-narrowed-or-widened.pdf>
- Dumont & Ready “Do Schools Reduce or Exacerbate Inequality”, AERJ, 2020 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Do-Schools-help-or-hurt-inequality.pdf>
- Ladsen-Billings “From Achievement Gap to Education Debt”, Oct. 2006 [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/From-the-Achievement-Gap-to-the-Education-Debt\\_Understanding-Achievement-in-US-Schools.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/From-the-Achievement-Gap-to-the-Education-Debt_Understanding-Achievement-in-US-Schools.pdf)
- Coley and Baker -- Poverty and Education: A Way Forward- Educational Testing Service, 2013, pp 7-39 [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/poverty\\_and\\_education\\_report1.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/poverty_and_education_report1.pdf)

#### In-Class Materials

- Sargrad et. al. Public Education Opportunity Grants, Center for American Progress, Oct. 2020 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Public-Education-Opportunity-Grants-1-1.pdf>

#### Assignments

- Policy Post Mortem -- Two teams present

### **Feb 24 -- What Happened to the Common Core? And the Rise of the Whole Child**

#### Readings

- Sanders -- Research Findings from Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System, 1998 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Research-findings-from-Tenn-Value-Added-System-Sanders.pdf>
- Education Next Forum A Decade on has Common Core Failed? Education Next 2020 <https://www.educationnext.org/decade-on-has-common-core-failed-impact-national-standards-forum-polikoff-petrilli-loveless/>
- Kirst, Common Core has not failed in California, Education Next, 2020 <https://www.educationnext.org/california-common-core-has-not-failed-forum-response/>
- Immordino-Yang -- The brain basis for integrated social-emotional-academic development, Aspen Commission, 2019 <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/the-brain-basis-for-integrated-social-emotional-and-academic-development/>
- Jager -- Equity and Social-Emotional Learning: A Cultural Analysis, 2018 <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/equity-and-SEL-.pdf>

### In-Class Materials

- **Goldstein -- What Happened to the Common Core**, New York Times, 2019  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/06/us/common-core.html>
- **Barnum -- Did the Common Core Work**, Chalkbeat, 2019  
<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2019/4/29/21121004/nearly-a-decade-later-did-the-common-core-work-new-research-offers-clues>
- **Balfanz -- Ed Next Podcast on Social-Emotional Learning**  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/tag/ednext/>
- **Ford -- Social-Emotional Learning for Black Students is Ineffective When it is Culture-Blind** <https://diverseeducation.com/article/166341/>

### Assignments

- Policy Post Mortem -- Two teams present

## **March 3 -- Building Pathways to Adult Success-College and Career Readiness**

### Readings

- **Balfanz -- Why We Need to Build Better Pathways to Adult Success** -- What the Data Says (Video) 2019 <http://www.pathwaystoadultsuccess.org/>
- **Roderick -- Potholes on Road to College**, Chicago Consortium of School Research, 2011  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Potholes-on-Road-to-College.pdf>
- **Patrick -- Inequities in Advance Coursework**, Education Trust, 2020  
<http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Inequities-in-Advanced-Coursework-Whats-Driving-Them-and-What-Leaders-Can-Do-January-2019.pdf>
- **Smith -- Advancing Racial Equity in CTE**, Center for American Progress Blog, 2019  
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/news/2019/08/28/473876/advancing-racial-equity-career-technical-education-enrollment/>
- **Carnevale -- Our Separate and Unequal Public College**, Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2018 [https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/SAUStates\\_FR.pdf](https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/SAUStates_FR.pdf)
- **Racial Inequity in Higher Education Funding**  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/10/29/racial-disparities-higher-education-funding-could-widen-during-economic-downturn>

### In-Class Assignment

- **Balfanz -- Expanding AmeriCorps to Help Those Still in Schools**, Op-ed, Baltimore Sun, 2020 <https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/op-ed/bs-ed-op-0625-expand-ameri-corps-20200624-yv6pq7z6znhdhnceumkg3ou26m-story.html>

### Assignments

- Policy Post-Mortem -- Two teams present
- Preview Op-ed assignment

## **March 10 -- The Elephant in the Room: Structural Racism and Policy for Who?**

### Readings

- **Noguera -- Structural Racism and the Urban Geography of Education**, Phi Delta Kappan article, 2020 <https://kappanonline.org/structural-racism-urban-geography-education-noguera-alicea/>

- **Pedro Noguera: Structural Racism and the Urban Geography of Education (Podcast)** <https://www.researchminutes.org/episode/pedro-noguera-structural-racism-and-the-urban-geography-of-education/>
- **Lofton -- Plessay's Tracks: African American Students Confronting Academic Placement in a Racially Diverse School and African American Community, 2021**
- **Losen -- Lost Opportunities -- How disparate school discipline continues to drive difference in opportunity to learn**, Center for Civil Rights Remedies, 2020, through page 58 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Lost-Opportunities-REPORT-v14-1.pdf>
- **Daniel -- A Step Closer to Racial Equity: Towards a Culturally Sustaining Model for Community Schools**, Urban Education, 2020 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/communityschoolsarticledanieletaldecember2020.pdf>

#### Assignments

- Op-Ed's -- Group 1

### **March 17 -- Ed Policy Players-Lawmakers and Regulators: Dept of Education and Congress**

#### Readings

- **Balfanz 2007 Senate Testimony** [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BalfanzSenateTestimony\\_2007.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BalfanzSenateTestimony_2007.pdf)
  - **How ESSA Passed**, chapter 3 of *The Every Student Succeeds Act*, eds F.M. Hess & M. Eden [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ESSA\\_ch3.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ESSA_ch3.pdf)
  - **ESSA, read:**
    - pages 7-9, Sec. 1003 School Improvement
    - pages 18-19, Sec. 1111 (B) Challenging State Academic Standard
    - pages 39-40, Sec. 1111 (D) Identification of Schools
- <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/essa-act-of-1965.pdf>

#### Assignments

- Op-eds -- Group 2

### **March 24 -- Ed Policy Players-Influencers: Think Tanks, Membership Organizations, Foundations, and Policy Advocates**

#### Readings

- **The Billionaire Boys' Club**, excerpt from *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* by Diane Ravitch <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/TheBillionaireBoysClub.pdf>
- **"The Race,"** pages 1 – 9 in *Class Warfare* by S. Brill <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ClassWarfareTheRace.pdf>

#### Assignments

- Op-eds -- Group 3

### **March 31 -- Ed Policy Players: State and Local Actors: Governors, Mayors, State Dept of Ed, School Boards and District Leaders**

#### Readings

- **The Prize: Who's in Charge of America's Schools?** by Dale Russakoff, chapters 1 & 2 <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ThePrizeWhosinCharge.pdf>

- **Cutting School, Chapter 5: Educational Dreams and Virtual Nightmares**  
[http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CuttingSchool\\_Chapter5\\_EDVN.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CuttingSchool_Chapter5_EDVN.pdf)

Assignments

- Op-eds -- Group 4

**April 7 -- Ed Policy Players; Outsiders-Courts and Grassroots organizations**

Readings

- **Education Policy Litigation as Devolution**, Harvard Law Review  
<https://harvardlawreview.org/2015/01/education-policy-litigation-as-devolution/>
- **Ghosts in the Schoolyard**, chapter 1 What School Means  
[http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GhostsSchoolyard\\_ch1.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GhostsSchoolyard_ch1.pdf)
- **Waiting for Superman** (VIDEO) <https://documentarylovers.com/film/waiting-for-superman/> (also available on Netflix)

Assignments

- Draft Policy Briefs and Presentations -- Group 1

**April 21 -- Ed Policy Players: Voices of the Moment: Teachers and Students**

Readings

- TBD

Assignments

- Draft Policy Briefs and Presentations -- Group 2

**April 28 -- What do we do now: From NCLB to the COVID-19 Moment -- Part 1**

Assignments

- Draft Policy Briefs and Presentations -- Group 3

**May 5 -- What do we do now: From NCLB to the COVID-19 Moment -- Part 2**

Assignments

- Draft Policy Briefs and Presentations -- Group 4

## **Announcements**

During the semester, the instructor may post announcements on Blackboard. It is your responsibility as a student to read all announcements and to contact the instructor with any questions that may arise as a result.

## **Policy Statements**

### **Academic Conduct**

The School of Education places the highest value on intellectual integrity and personal trust within our community. All SOE students assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the Johns Hopkins University's mission as an institution of higher education and with accepted standards of ethical and professional conduct. Students must demonstrate personal integrity and honesty at all times in completing classroom assignments and examinations, in carrying out their fieldwork or other applied learning activities, and in their interactions with others. Students are obligated to refrain from acts they know or, under the circumstances, have reason to know will impair their integrity or the integrity of the University. Refer to the school's website for more information regarding the [academic misconduct policy](#).

Please note that student work may be submitted to an online plagiarism detection tool at the discretion of the course instructor. If student work is deemed plagiarized, the course instructor shall follow the policy and procedures governing academic misconduct as laid out in the School of Education's Academic Catalog.

### **Attendance/Participation**

*SOE Attendance/Participation Policy Statement:*

Participation in lectures, discussions, and other activities is an essential part of the instructional process. Students are expected to attend class regularly; those who are compelled to miss a class should inform their instructor of the reasons for absences. Students who expect to miss several class sessions for personal, professional, religious or other reasons should consider enrolling in an alternative course section (if possible).

### **Academic Continuity**

Please note that in the event of serious consequences arising from extreme weather conditions, communicable health problems, or other extraordinary circumstances, the School of Education may change the normal academic schedule and/or make appropriate changes to course structure, format, and delivery. (For example, a class session may be delivered online via Blackboard in the event that the regularly scheduled face-to-face class session is cancelled.) In the event such changes become necessary, information will be posted on the School of Education website and communicated to you via email and/or Blackboard.

### **Classroom Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a documented disability who requires an academic adjustment, auxiliary aid or other similar accommodations, please contact Jennifer Eddinger in the Disability Services Office at 410-516-9734 or via email at [soe.disabilityservices@jhu.edu](mailto:soe.disabilityservices@jhu.edu).

(For more information please visit the [School of Education's Disability Services website](#).)

### **Diversity**

The Johns Hopkins School of Education (SOE) defines diversity as follows:



The United States is rich in diversity and its influence is global. Mindful of this, the SOE defines diversity in a myriad of ways: by ethnicity, religion, race, gender identity, age, national origin, exceptionalities, ideology, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. The education of our candidates involves a respect for diversity, meaning that each individual should be recognized for his or her own abilities, interests, ideas and cultural identity.

### **Zoom**

Your instructor may choose to record a synchronous class meeting in Zoom. Students may opt-out from identification in the recording by muting their audio, not enabling video, and not typing in the chat window. Class meetings recorded by the instructor may be shared with students in the class for instructional purposes related to this class. Students are not permitted to copy or share the recording with others.

### **Course Evaluation**

Please remember to complete an online course evaluation survey for this course. These evaluations are an important tool in the School of Education's ongoing efforts to improve instructional quality and strengthen its programs. The results of the course evaluations are kept anonymous – your instructor will only receive aggregated data and comments for the entire class. An email with a link to the online course evaluation form will be sent to your JHU email address towards the end of the course.

Thereafter, you will be sent periodic email reminders until you complete the evaluation. There is also a module on the My Institution page where you can access the evaluation and prompts to complete the evaluation when you log into Blackboard. Please remember to activate your JHU email account and to check it regularly. *(Please note that it is the School of Education's policy to send all faculty, staff, and student email communications to a JHU email address, rather than to personal or work email addresses.)*

If you are having difficulty accessing the course evaluation, you haven't received an email notification about the course evaluation, or if you have any questions in general about the course evaluation process, please contact [SOEEvalKit@jhu.edu](mailto:SOEEvalKit@jhu.edu). *(Please note that if a course has fewer than three enrolled students, SOE will not conduct an online course evaluation survey for the course.)*