

Module Code & Name	ECTs credits	Duration and semester	Prerequisite	Assessment	Contact Hours	Contact Details
Sociology of Education	5	Semester two	Not applicable	2.5k word written assignment	10 lecture sessions: 10 hours in total and three one-hour tutorial	Prof Andrew Loxley <LOXLEYA@tcd.ie>

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

On successful completion this module, the students should be able to:

- Critically discuss a range of sociological perspectives and concepts in relation to the field of schooling and education;
- Propose and articulate a sociologically informed stance in relation to issues in Irish schooling and education;
- Appraise the significance and impact of these perspectives and concepts presented to their own professional contexts;
- Identify and explain the importance of key sociological perspectives and concepts relative to their own educational experiences and/or where appropriate professional practice and development.

Rationale

The purpose of this module is to introduce students to key sociological frameworks and concepts which have been developed to explain the relationship between schooling, education and society. In particular the module will provide students with the opportunity to develop a range of critical ‘thinking tools’ through they can situate their work as educators vis-a-vis wider societal processes and social phenomena. In particular it will explore the way in which schooling and other forms of educational organisations are implicated in both the reproduction and distribution (as well as attempted re-distributions), of life chances and social ‘goods’ and ‘bads’, relative to different of social groups (e.g., gender, social class, sexuality, ethnicity, disability). As such it will take as its central theme Michel Foucault’s notion of the productive/oppressive function of schooling as a form of social institution.

The module will firstly introduce students to the main theoretical perspectives in a deliberate chronological order of their 'appearance' within the discipline. We will begin with the structural-functionalism of for example Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, followed by the rediscovery in the early 1970s of Marxism, Weber and Critical Theory and the emergence of feminist critiques. Lastly, we will introduce the various ideas associated with postmodernism and poststructuralism & education. The second aim is to build on this introduction to explore a range of contemporary social issues additional ones (such as gender, socio-ethnic linguistics, ethnicity, inclusion and social disadvantage) as they relate to schooling and education.

Aims

- To provide a critical introduction to key sociological perspectives and concepts as they relate to education and schooling;
- To critically explore how these perspectives and concepts apply to the Irish and similar education systems;
- To enable students to explore the intersection between sociological theory and their own educational experiences and/or where appropriate professional practice.

Content

The following are the four main content areas dealt with during the module.

- Introducing the grand narratives of the sociology of education part 1: the influence of structural-functionalism on the early period of the sociology of education.
- Introducing the grand narratives of the sociology of education part 2: the application of Marxism, Critical Theory and Pierre Bourdieu to the world of schooling.
- Introducing the grand narratives of the sociology of education part 3: the emergence of poststructuralism and postmodernism as a window on schooling and education.
- Contemporary Issues in Sociology of Education: Gender and identity, language and social class formation, and questions of difference around inclusion and exclusion.

The main mode of teaching is mainly expository (i.e. lectures) with the use of paired work where appropriate. Materials in the form of PowerPoint slides, lecture notes and readings are housed on 'my blackboard' and categorized by session. Students will be asked to engage in pre-reading of specific material prior to each lecture.