A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

"Culture" is one of the most common terms used in educational theory. Sooner or later, everyone seems to bring in the concept of culture to help explain some educational phenomenon. But while everyone refers to culture, few clarify what they mean when they use that term for they assume that everyone knows what they are talking about or, perhaps, no one knows. A well-known joke in the field of anthropology states that if you ask 101 anthropologists what they mean by "culture" you will receive 101 different responses. I see no reason not to think the same thing about educators. This seminar is designed to explore some of the different ways in which the term "culture" is used in scholarly discourses in the hope that such exploration will lead to a deepening of our theoretical understanding of the possible relationships between education and culture.

Goals of Course:
• To introduce students to thinking and talking in terms of culture.
• To introduce students to three different discourses around culture.
• To have students explore how different aspects of particular educational practices reveal differing understandings of culture.

To accomplish these goals, the course will assume three important positions. (1) Education must be understood as primarily a social activity. (2) Students must actively participate in the process of their own and their peers' education. (3) All statements of knowledge and value by students or the instructor must lay themselves open to critical dialogue.

"He that reads and grows no wiser seldom suspects his own deficiency, but complains of hard words and obscure sentences, and asks why books are written which cannot be understood"  
(Samuel Johnson, The Idler)
B. REQUIREMENTS

Readings:
- Foley, Douglas. *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Tejas*
- Giroux, Henry. *The Mouse that Roared*
- Peshkin, Alan. *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*

Assignments:
1. **Group Field Project.** Class will divide into groups. Each group will select a site and observe. At that site select a particular bounded, concrete place, group, or event. Write a paper that addresses the culture(s) of the place, group, or event. Your paper must provide an analysis of culture using each of the three discourses used in this course (cultural anthropology, sociology/social anthropology, and cultural studies). Either as part of your analyses or in the overall conclusion, discuss how this experience helped clarify the idea of "culture" for you. The object of this exercise is NOT to show you how theory can clarify what happens in schools, but rather, it is to provide concrete experiences to help clarify theory.

**HUMAN SUBJECT APPROVAL**

Before you observe or interview anyone on site, you must complete the appropriate human subjects form, turn that form in to me. Please review your set of forms and instructions. If you have any questions, please see me.

2. **Term Paper.** Each student will write a term paper on a topic relevant to the course. This paper will reveal an extensive reading of the literature and provide a critical analysis or argument on the topic. (55%)

C. COURSE OUTLINE

8/29 Topic: Introduction to the course and to culture  
Reading: (recommended) Opler, M. "Cause, Process & Dynamics in Evolutionism of É. B. Tylor"

I. DISCOURSE OF CULTURE IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

9/5 Topic: Classic Cultural Anthropological Discourses: "way of life"  
Reading: Kroeber, A.L. "The Superorganic"  
Benedict, Ruth, "a Brief Sketch of Serrano Culture"  
Malinowski, Bronislaw. "Man's Culture & Man's Behavior" (Parts I & II)  
Mead, Margaret, "Our Educational Emphases in Primitive Perspective"

9/12 Topic: Modern Cultural Anthropological Discourses: behavior vs. ideational  
Reading: Harris, Marvin. "Mother Cow" Chapter from *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches*  
Goodenough, Ward. “Problems in the Conception of Culture”  
Spradley, James. "Beating the Drunk Charge"  
Schneider, David. "Introduction" *American Kinship* (PARTS I & II)  
Geertz, Clifford. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"

9/19 Topic: Modernism, Postmodernism and Cultural Anthropological Discourses  
Reading: Rabinow, P. "Representations are Social Facts"  
Crapanzano, Vincent. "Home" from *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa*  
Kondo, Dorinne, Exerpts from "The Eye/I"
9/26 Topic: Cultural Anthropological Discourses and Education: The Idea of Cultural Difference  
Reading: Peshkin, *God's Choice*

II. DISCOURSE OF CULTURE IN SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

10/3 Topic: Social Discourses and Culture: Durkheimian: Culture As Force Of Integration  
Reading: Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. "White's View of a Science of Culture"
Frazier, E. Franklin, "Problems and Needs of Negro Children & Youth . . ."  
Bernstein, Basil "Ritual in Education"  
Myerhoff, Barbara "We Don’t Wrap Herring in a Printed Page"

10/10 Topic: Social Discourses and Culture: Weberian: Culture As Force Of Conflict  
Reading: Collins, "The Political Economy of Culture"  
Collins, Randall. "Functional and Conflict Theories of Educational Stratification"  
Swidler, Ann. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies"  
Du Bois, W. E. B., "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia"

10/17 Topic: Social Discourses and Culture: Critical & Post-Critical Discourses  
Reading: Williams, Raymond. "Culture"  
Bourdieu, "Symbolic Violence and Cultural Capital"  
Waquant, Loïc. “From Slavery to Mass Incarceration”  
Winant, Howard, “Contesting the Meaning of Race . . .”

10/24 Topic: Social Discourses, Culture, and Education: Culture As Force Of Integration & Conflict  
Reading: Foley, *Teaching Capitalist Culture*

III. DISCOURSE OF CULTURE IN CULTURAL STUDIES

10/31 CLASS TO BE RESCHEDULED

11/7 Topic: Cultural Studies: Culture as Style  
Hebdige. “Chaper 7” from *Subculture*  
Potter, Russell, “History—Spectacle—Resistance” from *Spectacular Vernaculars*

11/14 Topic: Cultural Studies (cont.)  
Reading: Slack, Jennifer D. "The Theory and method of Articulation in Cultural Studies"  
Bennett, Andy. "Rappin’ on the Tyne"  
Fiske, John. "Power Works"

11/20 Topic: Cultural Studies: The Circuit of Culture  
Reading: Giroux, *The Mouse that Roared*

11/28 Thanksgiving Holiday

12/5 Papers due