



**LNDN/FLOR EDUC 3305**  
**International Comparative Studies of Issues Impacting Education**  
**Systems**  
**CAPA LONDON AND FLORENCE PROGRAM**

Faculty	London: Dr Mary Seabrook, Florence: Dr Debora Chellini (Further faculty may be recruited for future iterations)
Contact	Via CANVAS email
Class Times	Parallel times, to be negotiated

### **Course Description**

The course provides students with an introduction to the school system in their study location and that of the other CAPA study locations. There will then be opportunities to compare it to the American system and to other learning communities in the world to better understand how they reflect and perpetuate the cultural values and identity of a country. Students will explore current educational issues from an intercultural perspective and develop their own informed views. At the end of the course students are expected to have acquired a basic knowledge and understanding about the structure and content of contemporary school systems and a capacity to use this knowledge for cross-national comparisons. The insights gained will allow students to consider a key question: how can we all contribute to the school of the future?

This course is designed as a CAPA Globally Networked Programme (GNL) connecting CAPA students in different study locations in order to examine issues from a transnational perspective. It will provide a unique opportunity to broaden critical understanding of the role of school system in the identity building process at an individual, social, political and national level. Through collaborative and comparative learning processes in both local environments and transnational communities, students will develop a deeper understanding of the role of school system in shaping values, societies and cultures.

### **Course Aims**

The course aims to provide students with opportunities to research and learn about the structure and functioning of compulsory schooling in their respective countries and to compare it with their own experience. They will be exposed to a variety of educational practices and start to understand how history and cultural values and assumptions underlie and influence curricula and other aspects of schooling. Through their analysis and comparisons, students will start to develop their own informed views on educational issues. School systems and processes both reflect and perpetuate the cultural identity of a country; thus studying schooling in a host country can provide useful insights for students.

### **Requirements and Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course. It will be particularly relevant to students studying education, or with internships in school settings.

## Learning Outcomes

Following completion of this course, students should be able to:

### *Globalisation:*

- critically analyse the structure of different educational systems from an historical, societal and international perspective

### *Social Dynamics:*

- identify relevant research questions on different aspects of schooling.
- undertake research to compare and evaluate differing approaches and their impact on individuals and societies.

### *Diversity:*

- become familiar with several teaching methodological approaches
- identify, describe and compare diverse education systems in cross-cultural contexts

### *Personal & Professional Development Skills:*

- develop effective ways to collaborate remotely with colleagues in other countries to undertake comparative and creative assignments
- improve their ability to present information in different formats (e.g. written reports, oral and video presentations).

## Globally Networked Learning (GNL) Methodology

This unit is taught across sites using classroom seminars, online resources and project work by students collaborating with peers in other centres. Seminars involve student presentations, tutor-led and guest lectures or question and answer sessions, class discussion and debate, and group project work. Student work will be supported by online resources including relevant academic articles, web-links and guidance on assignments. Students are expected to prepare for classes, be fully prepared to discuss assigned readings or tasks and actively participate in discussions and class exercises. They are also required to engage with students in other CAPA centres to prepare for joint assignments. The teaching strategies are designed to encourage active learning by all students.

### Field Components

Two field visits to schools (Seminar 8 and 14) will be included so that students gain first hand experience of school settings in their study abroad location.

## Assessment & Grading

Task	Assessment Items (for details, see section below)	Due Date of Assignments	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Participation (in class and online)	Weeks 1-14	15%	A, c, d, g
2	Group presentation of research topic to peers	Week 10	25%	A, b, c, d, e, g, h
3	Individual written report on research topic (3,000 words)	Week 11	35%	A, b, c, e, h
4	Video presentation on school of the future (10 mins)	Week 13	25%	F, g, h

### Gradescale:

DESCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NUMERIC	GPA
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DESCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NUMERIC	GPA
Outstanding (High Distinction)	A	93+	4.0
Excellent (Distinction)	A-	90 - 92	3.7
Very good (High Credit)	B+	87 - 89	3.3
Good (Credit)	B	83 - 86	3.0
Good (Credit)	B-	80 - 82	2.7
Average (Good Pass)	C+	77-79	2.3
Adequate (Pass)	C	73 - 76	2.0
Below Average (Borderline Pass)	C-	70-72	1.7
Inadequate (Borderline Fail)	D+	67 - 69	1.3
Poor (Fail)	D	60 - 66	0.7 - 1.0
Poor (Fail)	F	<60	0
Incomplete	I		

#### Assessment 1: Class Participation (15%)

This is a mark for participation, NOT attendance (which is compulsory). You must come to class suitably prepared as instructed by your professors. Participation includes both:

- a) Class discussions within site groups and between CAPA locations
- b) Online fora, including pre and post class comments, both as a group and an individual.

The following table is a guide to grading for participation.

Grade	Discussion
<b>A range</b>	<b>Excellent:</b> consistent contributor; offers original analysis and comments both in class and online; contributes ideas on topics; demonstrates preparation and understanding; works effectively with peers in cross site groups, contributes fully to group work; listens and responds appropriately to other contributions, takes care not to dominate discussion.
<b>B+</b>	<b>Very Good:</b> frequent, willing, and able contributor both in class and online; generally offers thoughtful comments, shows preparation and understanding of key concepts,

	contributes effectively to group work.
<b>B / B-</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> frequent contributor in class and online; basic grasp of key concepts but little original insight; shows preparation, comments/questions are of a general nature, contributes to group work.
<b>C range</b>	<b>Poor:</b> sporadic contributor; comments/questions betray lack of understanding of key concepts; may digress in unhelpful ways, contributes to group work in a limited way.
<b>D / F</b>	<b>Very Poor:</b> rarely speaks or contributes online; merely quotes text or repeats own comments or those of others, contribution to group work is lacking, limited or disruptive, shows little or no evidence of preparation.

### **Assessment 2: Group Presentation of Research Topic (25%)**

As a cross-site group, you will choose a research topic based on a question about an educational topic. Your professors will guide you as to how to develop such questions in weeks 1-4 and you will choose a topic in week 5. Examples of suitable questions might include: *How and why does the teaching of history vary between countries? What is the best method to train/prepare teachers for their role? Should personal electronic devices be banned in classrooms for the initial years of schooling? What, if any, role should religious bodies play in compulsory schooling?* You will analyse the issue in education and policy terms, drawing on varying perspectives and encompassing relevant evidence, theories and arguments.

Working as a group, you will gather information from a range of sources across sites, including local teachers, students and citizens, local newspapers and journals and relevant websites. The aim is to familiarise yourself with a range of perspectives on the issue, and to identify relevant academic research findings. You will then share your findings using whatever method you find most effective (e.g. Canvas Collaborations, Facebook, Skype) and work collaboratively to design a Powerpoint or Prezzi via Google Docs in Canvas. You will then present the topic to the class on both sites via a video link. You are asked to present in a way that encourages debate and discussion amongst your peers. Further guidance will be provided during the course.

Assessment will be based on i) the demonstrated level of understanding of key arguments and research evidence, ii) the professionalism of the presentation, including collaboration between group members, and iii) the extent to which it engages the class in discussion of the issue. Presentations must reference the literature and include a bibliography. A group mark will be given.

### **Assessment 3: Written report on research topic (30%)**

This assignment is a continuation from your presentation (above) but is written and submitted individually. The research you have conducted and used in your presentation will form the basis of the written assignment. However in the written assignment you will be asked to come to a personal view about the issue based on an informed knowledge of the arguments and, where appropriate, your own experience. You will present a report outlining your argument in the following format: outline of the research question, description of differing approaches to the issue (policy and practice) in a minimum of two countries (using both literature or online sources and personal observations/research), literature review of evidence pertaining to the issue, discussion/evaluation of different perspectives, conclusion summarising your findings and your personal view.

The assignment is 3,000 words and must include references to a minimum of 5 sources (of which at least 3 must be books or journal articles). References must be correctly formatted and a bibliography included. Assessment will be based on i) the structure and clarity of the report, ii) the accuracy and relevance of the comparison between practice and policy in different countries, iii) the quality of the literature review and its referencing, iv) the quality of the argument supporting the student's personal view.

### **Assessment 4: Group project - design a school of the future (30%)**

Students will work collaboratively in new cross-site groups to design 'A school of the future'. Students will start by considering challenges to the conventional model of Western schooling, as discussed by Ken

Robinson (see Course Materials) and others (e.g. Paulo Friere, Don Lorenzo Milani, Maria Montessori). They will then generate ideas for new ways to address the challenges of the future and make education relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students are encouraged to think laterally and imaginatively whilst also considering the practicality of their ideas. They will present their vision via a video presentation posted on Kaltura, explaining their ideas and rationale. This will be viewed by the class and the group will answer questions and defend their ideas.

The project will be assessed based on i) the creativity, practicality and relevance of the ideas, ii) the soundness of the educational rationale and their defence of it, iii) the quality of the video presentation, including visual aids.

## Course Materials

Arnove Robert F, *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and The Local*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers 2013.

Bignold W, Gayton S. *Global Issues and Comparative Education*. Learning Matters Ltd. 2009.

Robinson Ken. *How to Escape Education's Death Valley*. TED talks

Marshall Jennifer. *Introduction to Comparative and International Education*. Sage 2014

Miller R. *A Map of The Alternative Education Landscape*.

<http://www.educationrevolution.org/store/resources/alternatives/mapoflandscape/> Accessed 7-6-2016

RSA Animate. Changing Educational Paradigms. (adapted from a talk by Ken Robinson). [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U)

WikiHow. How to Think Outside of The Box. <http://www.wikihow.com/Think-'Outside-of-the-Box> Accessed 1-8-2016.

## Relevant websites from participating centres

### UK:

The British national curriculum: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum)

Types of schools in the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/overview>

Teacher training in England: <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/teacher-training/getting-started/routes-teaching>

### ITALY:

The Italian national curriculum and types of schools:

[http://www.indire.it/lucabas/lkwm\\_img/eurydice/quaderno\\_eurydice\\_30\\_per\\_web.pdf](http://www.indire.it/lucabas/lkwm_img/eurydice/quaderno_eurydice_30_per_web.pdf)

<http://www.istruzione.it/> (Italian)

## Library and research facilities

The library facilities are available for your use and copies of books in the above list will be available. Please use the library to access electronic resources (e-books, journal articles) and the internet. The [library catalogue](#) and electronic resources can also be accessed online off-campus. You can also borrow books for your own use.

## Weekly Schedule

<p><b>Seminar 1</b></p>	<p><b>Introduction and Course Overview</b></p> <p>The introductory session will explore the key role of school system in building local and global identity and community. In this seminar we will overview the GNL components of the unit, and discuss the semester ahead, including your assessment requirements.</p> <p>Principles of comparative schooling research.</p> <p>Scope of course (mainly participating countries, brief reference to other relevant countries including developing countries).</p> <p>Overview of course content and introduction to team-teaching process in CANVAS.</p> <p>Overview of GNL (why, how and when) and collaborative assessments.</p> <p>In-class review of CANVAS space dedicated to collaboration.</p> <p>Structure: in class lecture/video lecture combination OR synchronous event (depending on the similarity of the collaborating sites timetables).</p>	<p><b>In-class:</b></p> <p>Lectures by Debora and Mary</p> <p>Students to discuss their own schooling experiences and reflect on aspects of American schooling that they think may be unique to the US. Also, consider inter-state differences and the reasons for these as a prelude to discussing wider differences. (Some students may have been schooled in other countries, where again differences can be considered).</p> <p><b>In-class/online:</b> review of CANVAS and student collaboration process.</p>
<p><b>Seminar 2</b></p>	<p><b>School Systems: Structure</b></p> <p>This week we will be exploring the structure of the different contemporary educational system, from an historical and societal perspective.</p> <p>Lectures by video link:</p> <p>Mary: The British School System</p> <p>Debora: The Italian School System</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read Bignold &amp; Gayton, Chapter 1, Arnove Robert F Introduction, Marshall Jennifer Part I (p 3-25)</p> <p><b>In class:</b></p> <p>Lectures: Debora and Mary</p> <p>Students to discuss similarities and differences between the Italian and British systems and also compare to the US system. Choose one area of interest and identify a relevant question for potential research and debate. On the discussion group, write a brief summary of their discussion, and a clear research question.</p> <p><b>Online</b></p> <p>Discussion of collaboration groups</p>
<p><b>Seminar 3</b></p>	<p><b>School Systems: Contents</b></p> <p>This week we are exploring the role of educational contents, such as school syllabuses, in shaping national communities.</p> <p>Lectures by video link: Debora and Mary</p> <p>Focusing on their experiences of teaching at home and abroad (Debora in Italy, Australia and the US, Mary in the UK and Brunei): highlighting differences in educational context,</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b></p> <p>Read Marshall Jennifer Part II (p 115-202) Chapter 3: Culture and Education</p> <p>And Bignold &amp; Gayton, Chapters 2 &amp; 3</p> <p>Bring examples of curricula and observations of curricular activities from internship schools (where possible) or online sources.</p>

	syllabi and teaching methodology.	<p><b>In-class:</b></p> <p>Students to look at the national curriculum of their respective sites. Cross site groups to compare findings and present their analysis in class.</p> <p><b>Online after class</b></p> <p>Choose one area of interest and identify a relevant question for potential research and debate. On the discussion group, write a brief summary of their discussion, and a clear research question.</p>
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<p><b>Seminar 4</b></p>	<p><b>School Systems: Assessment</b></p> <p>Introductory lecture on issues around assessment (Debora/Mary)</p> <p>Lectures by video link:</p> <p>Debora: The Italian debate: ‘compito in class’ vs ‘INVALSI Testing’</p> <p>Mary: Government policy on testing and the response from teachers and parents</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Read Bignold &amp; Gayton Chapter 4.</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/eng/echisiamo.htm">http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/eng/echisiamo.htm</a> for INVALSI</p> <p><b>In-class:</b> Students to look at the examination structure and examples of assessments, and analyse what these reveal about the educational values of each country.</p> <p><b>Online:</b> Begin group collaboration for Assessment 2 (using Guidelines created in Google docs)</p> <p><b>Online after class</b> Choose one area of interest and identify a relevant question for potential research and debate. On the discussion group, write a brief summary of their discussion, and a clear research question.</p>
<p><b>Seminar 5</b></p>	<p><b>Teacher Training and Governance</b></p> <p>This session will focus on key issues in teacher training and the values inherent in different models.</p> <p>Teachers outline assessment requirements: presentation and research report. Discussion of research sources: primary and secondary.</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Read Cumberland D, Bignold W, McGettrick B. (Chapter 6). Teacher Education in a Changing Context. In: Bignold &amp; Gayton.</p> <p><b>In-class:</b> Students choose their research topic and groups for Assessment 3. Prepare questions for next week’s session.</p>
<p><b>Seminar 6</b></p>	<p><b>Current Issues in Education/Schools</b></p> <p>Interviews recorded or live with local teachers, professors and students.</p> <p>Report writing: discussion of report writing style, referencing.</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Come with questions relevant to your chosen research topic.</p> <p><b>In-class:</b> Analysis of use of structure and format of article, use of references, nature of references, development of argument etc using previously read chapters</p> <p>Students’ discussion on their progress on Assessment 2/3 supervised by teachers</p>
<p><b>Seminar 7</b></p>	<p>BREAK WEEK</p>	
<p><b>Seminar 8</b></p>	<p>School visit. Visit to a school of interest locally.</p>	<p><b>Online:</b> Students to submit 500 word summary of structure of report and bibliography individually.</p> <p>Set collaboration groups for final assignment 4 and start discussing ideas for a school of the future.</p>
<p><b>Seminar 9</b></p>	<p>Students report back on visits and collaborate</p>	<p><b>In-class:</b> Students discuss school visits.</p>



	on projects.	Work on projects. Individual and Group Tutorials relating to interim report submitted last week and next week's presentations. <b>Online:</b> Students to submit their group presentation (Assessment 2)
<b>Seminar 10</b>	Student presentations and debate on research questions.	<b>In class:</b> Presentation Assessment 2
<b>11</b>	Further student presentations (depending on numbers) <b>Thinking outside the box</b> Discussion of alternative models of schooling, challenges to conventional approaches and principles of a good education.	<b>Preparation:</b> Read: Miller R. A map of the alternative education landscape and WikiHow: Thinking outside the box. <b>In-class:</b> Watch Changing Educational Paradigms: Ken Robinson. Submission Assessment 3
<b>12</b>	Preparation of videos	<b>In-class:</b> Work collaboratively on content and presentation of final assignment.
<b>13</b>	Students present their school of the future	Presentation Assessment 4
<b>14</b>	School visit and presentation Review of course.	During school visit, students present their visions of future schools to an audience.

## Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

### Attendance

CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Students are also expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time. Attendance is mandatory and is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and ultimately in a F for the course.

### Missing classes for medical reasons

If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, you must send an e-mail to let the Director of Academic Affairs (DAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting by emailing [dvaughan@capa.org](mailto:dvaughan@capa.org). Note that calling the CAPA Center (02 9929 5253) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

### Class Participation

Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from you, the student, a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

**Use of electronic equipment in class**

Students are encouraged to use appropriate equipment both in class and in their private study. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Director of Academic Affairs or the Resident Director at the beginning of Term.

**Late Submission**

Late submission of papers due, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than 48 hours prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.