TE 943 Seminar in Professional Development
Spring 2004

Lynn Paine   Tuesdays 4-7
317 Erickson Hall 355-3266
painel@msu.edu
office hours by appointment

Introduction

Professional development represents a large and amorphous collection of ideas, practices, and perspectives. It exists as a field of work for many in the U.S. and other countries, and that work is informed by policies, programs, and tools that are sometimes very local and other times widespread, even global. Yet as a field of inquiry, professional development tends to draw on very different constructs and tools, as it has come to be seen as part of the field of teacher learning. This course is an attempt to bring together what are often two very different discourses—the practice of professional development and the research of it. Throughout the term, we will explore what happens as we try to have each of these different discourses speak to the other. As policies and reforms continue to place teacher change at the heart of larger educational transformation, the need to examine teacher development—what it is and how one understands it--is especially important.

Within the research on teachers' professional development, there has been much attention to structures of professional development. We find, for example, much policy and practical interest in mentoring and induction programs as solutions to the problems of teacher quality and teacher retention. Yet much of the literature on these topics, as in much of the research on professional development more generally, has left unexamined the content and nature of professional development activity. These will be central concerns for our course.

One goal for our class is to develop rich conceptual lenses for understanding professional development. We begin with the claim that professional development is a kind of teacher learning. Much of this class

will focus on conceptualizing teacher learning, and how teacher learning at different points in the teacher's professional continuum, and in different contexts. We will draw heavily on sociohistorical and social practice approaches to understanding teacher development. We start with the assumption that teaching is a situated practice, and that teacher learning is likewise a situated practice. We will explore what it means that this phenomenon is situated, as well as a practice. Three key ideas from sociocultural theoretical work will serve as focal points for different chunks of the term: activity, community of practice, and tool.

Another goal for the class will be to explore different practices of professional development and to inquire about what is going on within the activity and how and where learning occurs. It is that set of questions that orients our attention to activity. We will be reading about and discussing a range of diverse activities undertaken in the interest of teacher development and we will try to get inside them, to understand what they are, what they are attempting, and how they work. But we recognize that activities only occur within contexts and communities, and our attention to how teachers learn in communities of practice will allow us to explore in more depth some of the contextual factors that shape teacher development.

Finally, we will use as texts in the course not only scholarly research— on theories of learning, teacher learning, or the practice of professional development—but also popular texts that are the tools of widely used professional development. Here we will seek to use constructs from new work in sociocultural approaches to examine the tools of professional development.

Course activities: reading, writing, projects

This course is intended to support you in your development as a teacher educator and as a researcher. To that end, our writing and analysis will center on three different kinds of activities:

• Literature review
• Observation
• Tool analysis

As doctoral students, it is important to have the opportunity not only to acquaint oneself with a body of work, but to develop sufficient critical understanding of that work that you can see patterns within it, examine issues and disagreements in it, and surface questions that you believe warrant further study. We will read several literature reviews as a way to develop some familiarity with the genre, and one major writing task will be to develop a literature review on some sub-topic of important to your own learning about professional development and teacher learning. I welcome your working with colleagues to develop your literature review, just as more established colleagues work and write together.

I also invite you, as beginning researchers, to explore what it means to try to study a phenomenon in the field. In classes we often emphasize building new conceptual frameworks or learning how others have described, analyzed or explained some phenomenon. We then tend to draw on our prior experience to make sense of these analyses and constructs. In this class, although we will indeed be doing those things, we also need to see what it means—as researchers—to try to make sense of the activity of teacher learning by attempting to observe some such activity. A major assignment therefore will involve your selecting some professional development activity and conducting and writing up an observation of it. We will work together as a class to develop a framework for this observation.

A final major assignment will allow you to examine in depth a tool that is used as part of some professional development program. Here you will have the chance to see how the conceptual frameworks we develop in class can help you gain insight into the processes, goals, and norms of some practices in teacher learning. You will have the opportunity to work with a colleague on this task, should you choose to do so.

Throughout the term, we will want to make sure that this class reflects and builds on the questions and interests you bring to it. To that end, we will begin a conversation on Blackboard about each week's readings. While I will not provide detailed feedback on your commentaries, I will try to write a response—either to you individually, groups of you, or the class as a whole—so that we can begin a genuine dialogue that supports and runs alongside our class. As you write, use this as an opportunity to raise

questions, make critiques of issues you see in the research, draw connections to other things you and we have been considering, or use this to explore and reflect on your own experience.

In addition, as a way of ensuring your ability to shape the direction of this course, each of you will work as co-instructor with me one week of the term. This is a chance for you to get more deeply into readings, to think about the big issues, their connections to other weeks' conversations, and how we engage others around those ideas.

Grading

This course will work as a seminar, and your regular and thoughtful participation is an essential part of its success. We will want to develop class expectations about writing, and I will provide guidance on particular assignments throughout the term. You will need to meet with me a week in advance of the class we are co-teaching so that we can plan together how we want to lead or facilitate that session.

I would welcome the chance for us as a class, or for you individually with me, to think about how you would like to be assessed in the class. I propose the following breakdown or weighting, but would be open to your making a case for choosing some different percentages. My only requirements are that you engage in all parts or activities, and that each part represents some significant effort (that is, not smaller than 15%).

Participation (including shared responsibility for teaching): 15%
Blackboard commentary: 15%
Literature review: 25%
Observation: 25%
Tool analysis: 25%

Required reading

We have required books available at Student Bookstore (351-4210). These are:

Dewey, Experience and Education

Tharp and Gallimore, *Rousing Minds to Life*
Lave and Wenger, *Situated Learning*
Wenger, *Communities of Practice*

We also have a coursepacket (available as a CD or hard copy from the Copy Center) as well as downloadable articles, available either through MSU libraries or a website listed in the syllabus. For those materials you will download from MSU libraries: click Electronic Resources and type in name of journal, or

http://er.lib.msu.edu/subject.cfm?cat=0&type=Electronic%20journal&subject=Education

Course schedule

Week 1. Jan. 13 Introduction to the course

Week 2. Jan. 20 What constitutes professional development: Considering goals and definitions

Greene, M. (2001) Educational purposes and teacher development. In A. Lieberman and L. Miller (Eds.) *Tecahers Caught in the Action: Professional Development that Matters* (pp. 3-11). NY: Teachers College Press. In packet.

Dewey, J. *Experience and Education*, particularly chapters 1-3.

Little, J.W. (1993). Teachers' professional development in a climate of educational reform. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15(2), 129-151. In packet.

Hawley, W. and Valli, L. (1999). The essentials of effective professional development: A new consensus. In L. Darling-Hammond and G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the Learning Profession: Handbook of Policy and Practice*, (pp. 127-150). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. In packet.

Guskey, T. R. (2003). What makes professional development effective? *Phi Delta Kappan*. 84, issue 10. 748-763. Available for downloading through MSU libraries.

Review from prior reading: Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 103, 1013-1055. Available on http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=10824

I. Activity in teacher development

Week 3. Jan. 27 What does it mean to examine activities of/activity in professional development?

> Tharp, R. and Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing Minds to Life: Teaching, learning and schooling in social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 4. Feb. 3 Theorizing teacher learning

> Lave, J. (1996). Teaching, as learning, in practice. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, <u>3</u>(3), 149-164. Available at the Lave site on www.education.miami.edu/blantonw/ mainsite/Component1.html

> Rogoff, B. (1995). Observing sociocultural activity on three planes: Participatory appropriation, guided participation, and apprenticeship. In P. M. J. Goodnow, & F. Kessel (Ed*.), Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp.139-164). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In packet.

> Putnam, R. and Borko, H. (1997). Teacher learning: Implications of new views of cognition. In B, J. Biddle et al. (Eds.) *International Handbook of Teachers and Teaching* (pp. 1223-1296). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers. In packet.

Week 5. Feb. 10 Surveying the field of research on teachers' professional development

> Wilson, S. M., & Berne, J. (1999). Teacher learning and the acquisition of professional knowledge: An examination of research on contemporary professional development. In A. Iran-Nejad, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Review of Research in Education, 24,* 173-209. In packet.

> Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1999). Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning communities. In A. Iran-Nejad, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Review of Research in Education, 24,* (pp. 249-305). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association. In packet.

Ball, D. L. & Cohen, D. K. (1999). Developing practice, developing practitioners: Toward a practice-based theory of professional education. In L. Darling-Hammond and G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice*, (pp. 3-32). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. In packet.

Little, J.W. (1999). Organizing schools for teacher learning. In L. Darling-Hammond and G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice*, (pp. 233-262). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. In packet.

Week 6. Feb. 17 Theorizing teacher development as situated learning

Lave, J. and Wenger. E (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* NY: Cambridge University Press.

**Propose focus for your literature review

II. Commmunity and context in teacher learning

Week 7. Feb. 24 Professional development in communities, collaboration, and networks

Cobb, P., McClain, K., Lamberg, T.d.S, and Dean, C. (2003). Situating teachers' instructional practices in the institutional setting of the school and district. *Educational Researcher*, vol. 32, no. 6, pp. 13-24. Available for downloading from MSU libraries.

Lieberman, A. and Wood, D. (2001). When teachers write: Of networks and learning. In A. Lieberman and L. Miller (Eds.) *Teachers Caught in the Action: Professional Development that Matters* (pp. 174-187). NY: Teachers College Press. In packet.

Paine, L. and Ma, L.P. (1993)Teachers Working Together: A Dialogue on Organizational and Cultural Perspectives on Chinese Teachers, *International Journal of Educational Research* Vol 19., no. 8: 675-697. In packet.

Lord, B. (1994). Teachers' professional development: Critical Colleagueship and the role of professional communities. In N. Cobb (Ed.), *The future of education: Perspectives on national standards in education (pp. 175-203)*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board. In packet.

Spring break

Week 8. March 9 Theorizing communities of practice

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Complete observation

Week 9. March 17 Working in and building community

Little, J.W. (2002). Locating learning in teachers' communities of practice: opening up problems of analysis in records of everyday work, *Teaching and Teacher Education, 18, 917-946.* Available for downloading through MSU libraries

McDonald, J. Students' Work and Teachers' Learning. (2001). In A. Lieberman and L. Miller (Eds.) *Teachers Caught in the Action: Professional Development that Matters* (pp. 209-235). NY: Teachers College Press.

Gallucci, C. (2003). Theorizing about responses to reform: The role of communities of practice in teacher learning. Available for downloading from www.ctpweb.org.

Grossman, P. L., Wineburg, S. S., and Woolworth, S. (2001). Toward a theory of teacher community. *Teachers College Record*, vol 103, n. 6: 942-1012. Available for downloading through MSU libraries.

Week 10. March 23. Challenges to learning in community and to transporting professional development across contexts

> Little, J. W. (1990). The Persistence of Privacy: Autonomy and Initiative in Teachers' Professional Relations. *Teachers College Record,* vol 91, n 4: 509-536. In packet.
>
> Fernandez, C. (2002). Learning from Japanese approaches to professional development: The case of lesson study. *Journal of Teacher Education.*, vol. 53, n. 5: 393-405. Available for downloading through MSU libraries.
>
> Fernandez, C., Cannon, J., & Chokshi, S. (2003). A US-Japan lesson study collaboration reveals critical lenses for examining practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 19: 171-185. . Available for downloading through MSU libraries.
>
> *Selections* from Lewis, C. (2002). *Lesson Study: A Handbook of Teacher-Led Instructional Change.* Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools, Inc. Available in class.
>
> **submit observation write-up

III.   Tools in teacher learning

Week 11.   March 30. Conceptualizing tools in teacher learning

> Gauvain, M. (2001).   Cultural tools, social interactions and the development of thinking. *Human Development*, 44: 126-143. . Available for downloading through MSU libraries.
>
> **Begin examining selected tools,** such as:
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> ADEA (Association for Development of Education in Africa) CD for the Biennial Meeting.

Breaux, A. and Wong, H. (2003). *New Teacher induction: How to train, support and retain new teachers.* Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications.

Danielson, C. (1996). *Enhancing Professional Practice. A framework for teaching.* ASCD.

Lipton, L. and Wellman, B. (2003). *Making Mentoring Work.* ASCD.

Loucks-Horsley, S. et al. (2003). *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of mathematics and Science* (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

New Teacher Center. (2003). *Using the Continuum of Teacher Development.* Santa Cruz, CA.

Portner, H. (2002). *Mentoring New Teachers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Portner, H. (2001). *Training Mentors is Not Enough: Everything Else Schools and Districts Need to Do.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Stein, M. K. et al. (2000). *Implementing Standards-based Mathematics Instruction: A Casebook for Professional Development.* NY: Teachers College Press.

Villani, S. (2001). *Mentoring Programs for New teachers: models of Induction and Support.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Week 12. April 6. Views of mentoring and induction

Little, J. W. (1990). The Mentor Phenomenon and the Social Organization of Teaching. In C. Cazden (Ed.). *Review of research in education (pp. 297-351). 16.* AERA. In packet.

Huling-Austin, L. (1992) Research on learning to teacher: Implications for teacher induction and mentoring programs. *Journal of Teacher Education.* V 43, n 3: 173-180). In packet.

Gold, Y. (1996). Beginning teacher support: Attrition, mentoring and induction. In Sikula, J. et al (eds) *Research on Teacher Education* (pp, 548-594), 2nd ed. NY: Macmillan. In packet.

Wang, J and Odell, S J. (2002). Mentored Learning to teach according to standards based rofrm: a critical review. *Review of educational research,* 72, 3: 481-546. Available to download from MSU libraries.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2003). What new teachers need to learn. *Educational Leadership*, 60, 25-29. In packet.

Week 13.   April 13.   Examining tools for mentoring and induction.

**Complete tool analysis, present in class

Week 14.   April 20.   The challenge of transforming professional development through professional developers

Stein, M. K. et al (1999). The development of professional developers: Learning to assist teachers in new settings in new ways. *Harvard Educational Review,* 69, 3. Available for downloading from MSU libraries.

Feiman-Nemser, S. and Parker, M. Mentoring in Context: A Comparison of Two U.S. Programs for Beginning Teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research ,* 19, 8: 699-718. In packet.

Paine, L. and Fang Y. (In press). Challenges in Reforming professional development. In Hannum and Park, (Eds). *Educational Reform in China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. In packet.

Week 15.   April 27.   Sharing our learning about teacher learning.

**Turn in literature reviews, present in class in poster session