Educational Inequalities in the Life Course

2nd term Seminar (2016-2017)

Organised by Hans-Peter Blossfeld

Tuesdays 13:00-15:00, Sala del Capitolo, Badia Fiesolana

Register with Adele Battistini (Adele.Battistini@eui.eu)

Description

This seminar is for researchers who are interested in (cross-national comparative) life course research and/or educational inequality. It provides an overview of the state of the art in current education research and will introduce participants to the longitudinal studies of educational processes. The seminar will discuss central concepts of educational research (such as competence development, changes in self-concept, self-regulation, social skills, and motivation, the relationship between abilities, teacher’s evaluations and teacher’s recommendations, the role of educational certificates etc.). Major educational phases and transitions between these phases (within and between institutions) and their short- and long-term effects over the entire life span are a main topic of the seminar. The theoretical and empirical orientation of the course is centered around the impact of social origin on (1) competence development (primary effects) and (2) educational decision making (secondary effects); (3) the importance of differential learning environments and (cross-national) variations of educational institutions; (4) the role of gender and migration background for educational success; and (5) various kinds of returns to education (earnings, employment, better health, less crime, political participation etc.). The seminar meetings are organized around educational phases in the life course. They will start with effects of very early experiences in the family of origin, the short- and long-term effects of preschool childcare, the role of institutional sorting within and between schools in lower and upper secondary school, the impact of cross-national variations of vocational training and forms of lifelong learning and their effects on educational inequality in modern societies.

Researchers are expected to come to class fully prepared and to have thoroughly completed the assigned readings before each meeting. Participants must present the key readings of one or two meetings. For this purpose they have to send a PowerPoint presentation to the course website the day before class. These presentations will then be discussed in class together with the readings themselves. There is also the possibility that researchers present their own research projects on topics related to (comparative) educational inequality.
Researchers can write a term paper for this class as part of their general term paper requirements. They need, however, to make significant use of the readings of the syllabus and discuss important substantive and methodological issues of researching educational inequality. Those who wish to write a term paper should consult with me and submit both a paper copy and an electronic copy to me (and to Adele Battistini in cc).

**Tuesday January 10th, 2017**

**Introduction and Overview (Longitudinal analysis of educational histories, data on educational processes)**


**Tuesday January 17th, 2017**

**Results and Limitations of ‘Classical Studies’ (The Wisconsin study; the socioeconomic achievement process; socioeconomic background, ability, and achievement; educational expansion and changes in inequality of education)**

W. H. Sewell and R. M. Hauser (1975): Education, occupation, and earnings, Chapters 1 (pp. 1-13) and 3 (pp. 43-88).


**Tuesday January 24th, 2017**

**Socioeconomic status and gene-environment interplay (Heritability; stability and change in intelligence; socioeconomic status and brain development; sensitive periods; accumulation; pathway models)**


E. I. Knudsen, J. J. Heckman, J. L. Cameron, and J. P. Shonkoff (2006): Economic, neurobiological, and behavioral perspectives on building America’s future workforce, in:


Tuesday January 31st, 2017
Long-term effects of early childhood intervention (Perry Preschool Study; Carolina Abecedarian Project; Child Parent Centers)


Tuesday February 7th, 2017
Primary and secondary effects of social background (performance versus choice in education)


**Tuesday February 14th, 2017**

**Development and measurement of competencies across the life course**


**Tuesday February 21st, 2017**

**Individual as co-producer of development; life-span theory of control**


**Tuesday February 28th, 2017**

**Different school systems and educational achievement**


Tuesday March 7th, 2017
Educational Opportunities of Immigrants, acquisition of bilingualism


Tuesday March 14th, 2017
Vocational training, transition from education to work, and lifelong learning

