ESSAY DIRECTIONS

Please answer two of the four Doctoral Exam questions provided below. Devote about equal time and space to each of the two essays. Do not repeat in your second essay content and analysis already provided in the first essay. Take care to address each component of the exam question. Draw appropriately from the scholarly literature. Be sure to provide references to original sources (e.g., book, chapter, or journal article) for statements that refer to ideas, words, or research findings of another person. Use appropriate headings and subheadings throughout the paper. Write clear, grammatically correct sentences and logical paragraphs.

Formatting

- Clearly label the question number for each essay.
- Each essay should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words. Do not exceed 2,500 words per essay.
- For each essay provide a bibliography of works cited. Essay word count does NOT include the bibliography.
- Use a standard 12-point font, double-spacing, and numbered pages.
- Run a spell check on each essay prior to submission.
EAPS DOCTORAL EXAM
August 2016

SUBMITTING YOUR ESSAYS

1. The exam questions will be emailed to you by Maria Moon as scheduled Thursday, August 18, 2016 @ 3:00pm. Return your essays by e-mail attachment to Maria (mmoon@albany.edu) no later than 1:00 pm on Friday, August 26, 2016. The attachment must be a single Word Document. Please do not send your essays to anyone other than Maria. You will receive a response acknowledging receipt by the end of the day on Friday, August 26th from Maria.

2. *Once you have received the exam and opened the attachments on Thursday, August 18th, please immediately email Maria Moon (mmoon@albany.edu) confirmation of receipt, prior to starting the exam, so she knows that you have successfully received your copy of the exam.

3. On a separate sheet of paper, please add the Honor Code Statement (below) followed by your name and date. Please include this with your essay email to Maria Moon when finished.

The two doctoral exam essays I submit are original, new work that I alone have authored. In writing these essays, I have not consulted with, or received help from anyone else. I have taken care to provide proper citations for all ideas, statements, quotations, and facts presented that are not my own. I have also read and adhered to the University’s “Standards of Academic Integrity” policy.

Name____________________________________________ Date____________________

4. Should an emergency arise during the exam period that prevents you from completing the exam, you must email and call Dr. Alan Wagner awagner@albany.edu, phone # 518-366-7378. (Please note: – this phone number is exclusively for notifying Dr. Wagner of an emergency associated with the doctoral examination, and must not be used for any other purpose in the future, or shared with any other person.) Under no circumstances should you share your confidential “Student X” identifier with Dr. Wagner, or any other member of the faculty.

5. Please submit an additional hardcopy of your exam and Honor Code Statement along with your signature and date. You may submit this hard copies via First Class Mail or hand delivery to Maria Moon’s office (ED 344) in a sealed envelope. Mailed envelopes must be postmarked by Monday, August 29, 2016 at midnight. Hand deliveries must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, August 29, 2016. If Maria is not in her office to receive the hand delivery, please slide the sealed envelope under her door. Thank you.
Question 1

Much of the attention given to policies and practices in education focuses on the establishments, such as schools, colleges, or training providers. Partnerships, as developed in practice and/or encouraged by policies, offer a different vantage point. Partnerships in education are not new. Partnerships manifest in many forms, connecting public and private, school and community, as well as connecting units and actors within educational establishments themselves. Partnerships are formed at every level of education, and in every setting from local to regional to national to international.

For this question, identify, describe, and analyze a partnership in education of your choosing. You may choose any level of education and any setting.

In your essay:

(a) Fully define, describe, and situate the education partnership that you have chosen.

(b) Locate the partnership against relevant extant literature, in providing a basis on which to understand its rationale and approach. What explicit or implicit assumptions are embedded in its approach? What outcome(s) are expected as a consequence of the partnership?

(c) Provide an appropriate basis to evaluate outcomes of the partnership. If studies of the effects of the partnership exist, critique them. If no studies exist, design a study that would provide evidence. In the critique or the design, justify whether it would be useful to maintain the partnership as is, expand the partnership, or reduce the scope of actors engaged in the partnership.
Question 2

For a decade or more, we have often seen education reforms in both k-12 and higher education motivated by what might be called the economic imperative, with terms such as “economic competitiveness,” “needs of the knowledge economy,” or “21st century skills” used to justify particular sets of education reforms. The economic imperative rationale for education can be contrasted to a democratic imperative rationale that, in some observers’ judgment, was more prevalent in earlier times when reference to the needs of strengthening the democratic polity and a flourishing civic participation were used to guide education provision if not motivate education reforms.

For this question, write an essay in which you:

a) Compare and contrast the economic imperative and democratic imperative rationales of education reform, with reference to their substantive ideas; here and throughout, cite relevant literature.

b) Do you agree that the economic imperative rationale seems often to take ascendancy over the democratic imperative rationale? If so, what are the causes? If not, how would you assess the role of either set of ideas in motivating policy today?

c) Discuss to what extent the two rationales are compatible or in conflict. How does the direction of education reform activities change as policymakers privilege one rationale over the other? Can the two rationales under current social and political conditions be integrated? If not, comment on the obstacles that might prevent such integration.
Question 3

Scholars and policymakers who seek to design accountability policies in education are confronted with numerous technical and political challenges. Designers of accountability policies must consider the following questions: Who will be accountable to whom, for what, and how?

Select a current or prior attempt to design and implement an accountability policy at any level of education in any local, state/provincial, or national context. Address the following items:

a) Identify the main actors, principles or assumptions, and processes in the accountability policy you have selected.

b) Discuss key strengths and weaknesses of the accountability policy you have selected, focusing on the following questions:
   - To what extent is the accountability policy technically feasible?
   - To what extent is the accountability policy politically acceptable to the main actors and other stakeholders?
   - Has the accountability policy yielded outcomes that advance excellence, efficiency, and/or equity in education delivery or is it likely to do so? Why or why not?
**Question 4**

Much research documents the fact that promising educational innovations frequently “do not take.” They are either marginalized, neutralized, or outright rejected.

In your essay:

a) Give an example of this phenomenon (historical or contemporary).

b) What theories would you draw on to explain the phenomenon?

c) What are the implications for education policy?