

EDUC 2110: 91 **INVESTIGATING CRITICAL & CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION** Spring 2018

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Support for Courses

CourseDen D2L Home Page https://westga.view.usg.edu/	Student Services http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php
D2L UWG Online Help (M-F:8 AM – 5 PM) http://uwgonline.westga.edu/students.php Call: 678-839-6248 or 1-855-933-8946 or email: online@westga.edu	Center for Academic Success http://www.westga.edu/cas/ 678-839-6280
24/7/365 D2L Help Center Call 1-855-772-0423 or search: https://d2lhelp.view.usg.edu/	Distance Learning Library Services http://libguides.westga.edu
University Bookstore http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/	Ingram Library Services http://www.westga.edu/library/

COE Vision

The College of Education at the University of West Georgia will be recognized for *Leading a New World of Learning*, with relevant and innovative programs that contribute to educational improvement and the betterment of society.

COE Mission

Locally connected and globally relevant, the Mission of the College of Education is to prepare graduates for meaningful, professional careers in diverse settings. With three dynamic areas of focus – Educator Preparation, Clinical Practice, and Human Performance – and programs that range from undergraduate through doctoral study, we are committed to excellence in teaching, professional service, engaged partnerships, and applied research.

COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course engages students in observations, interactions, and analyses of critical and contemporary educational issues. Students will investigate issues influencing the social and political contexts of educational settings in Georgia and the United States. Students will actively examine the teaching profession from multiple vantage points both within and outside the school. Against this backdrop, students will reflect on and interpret the meaning of education and schooling in a diverse culture and examine the moral and ethical responsibilities of teaching in a democracy. **A field component (totaling 10 hours) is required.**

Credit Hours: 3

Required Texts: Readings will be found at Teacherrenewal.wikispaces.com, with additional readings coming from professional/educational journals/ books.

Course References

- Alexie, S. (2005). *Reservation blues*. New York: Grove Press.
- Davis, S and Jenkins, G. et al. (2003) *The pact*. NY: Riverhead Trade.
- deMarras, K. (2006). *The way schools work*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Gabbard, D. (2003). *Education as enforcement*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

- Goodlad, J. (2004). *A place called school*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Greene, M. (1973). *Teacher as stranger*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.
- Jelloun, T. B. (2006). *Racism explained to my daughter*. New York: New Press.
- King Jr, M. L. (1990). *A testament of hope*. New York: Harper-Collins.
- Kozol, J. (1992). *Savage inequalities: Teaching tolerance project, starting small*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Glazer, S. (1997). *The heart of learning*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.
- Newman, J. (2006). *America's teachers*. (5th ed.) Boston: Pearson.
- Martin, D. and Loomis, K. (2006). *Building teachers*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.
- Noddings, N. (1994). *Educating moral people*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Noll, J. W. (2004). *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial educational issues*. Columbus, Ohio: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.
- Paley, V. (2000). *White teacher*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Payne, R. (2005). *Framework for understanding poverty*. Highlands, TX: Aha Process.
- Ravitch, D. (2001). *Left back*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Sadker, Sadker. (2004). *Teachers, schools, and society*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Spring, J. (2005). *American education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Spring, J. (2006). *Deculturalization and the struggle for equality*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stoll, C. (2000). *Hi-Tech heretic*. New York: Anchor.
- Toni, M. (2004). *Remember: The journey to school integration*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Tozer, J. (2004). *School and society: Historical and contemporary perspectives*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

APPROACHES TO INSTRUCTION

This interactive course will draw upon various approaches for learning such as, small group discussions, interview, journaling, participating in a SPARK program and more. This course will be delivered approximately 40% online. These classes will be delivered through Course Den and Blackboard Collaborate.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. investigate and describe contemporary schools and the interplay of school and society via selected social, historical, political, economic, philosophical, and cultural issues that influence those schools.
2. discover, explore, and describe current issues and trends in schools (e.g., bullying, curriculum mandates, vouchers, privatization, testing and evaluation, federal and state policy, reform initiatives, standards, and changes in curriculum) using disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields and the lenses of analysis, critique, and interpretation.
3. analyze their legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities as future teachers.
4. explore their core values and reflect on how their values influence their beliefs about “good” teaching and schooling in democratic contexts.
5. develop and refine a philosophy of teaching for contemporary schools by exploring who they are as a potential teacher (e.g., examining their own agendas and prejudices as they relate teaching and learning) and what dispositions they have for teaching diverse students in current Georgia and U.S. school contexts.
6. analyze the implications, benefits, and challenges concerning the use of technology in contemporary Georgia and U.S. classrooms.

Assignments and Evaluation Procedures

Reflections on 3 Readings

Summarize and critically reflect on 2 readings & submit into ASSIGNMENT box.

Assignments

1. Ask a teacher about the challenges they face to being a successful teacher – Due Feb 20.

3. Who am I? What are the influences that have shaped my life? Develop the COSMOS of your life.

4. **Field observation activity.** This 10 hour project is required for each EDUC class. You are responsible for finding your own placement. Because field observation is a certification requirement rather than a course assignment, failure to provide documentation that 10 hours of field observation have been completed will result in a grade of F for the course. The 10 hour field observation **time log** (located on the TeacherRenewal website) is due by April 12 at 10 PM.

5. **Reflective Field observation report.**

What is reflective writing for this course? Guide can also be found on the TeacherRenewal website.

First, describe your observation experience including the setting, what is going on and how you felt. Second, critically reflect on the experience. How was this experience relevant and informative about issues covered in this course? What lessons have you learned about yourself as an educator? Lastly, looking ahead, how might this observation experience inform you about your future practice in the field of education? Be sure to use academic language that we have used in this course as you link your observation to this course. Due April 17 at 10 PM.

The following assignments will allow you to practice reflective writing using academic language.

1. I and Thou philosophy
2. Reflection responses to the readings
3. Field Observation Activity

6. Research a critical educational issue – Due by class time on April 17

ALL Papers need to be submitted in the ASSIGNMENT box which is in Course Den.

Evaluation Procedures

A final grade will be assigned to each student based on the quality of the work submitted. **Your Participation** is an integral dimension for learning and is encouraged. I invite you to become involved in every class. No classes should be missed. More than two (**2**) absence for any reason will lower your grade by **one letter grade.**

Teacher interview	20 pts	20%
Field Observation – Ten Hours	10 pts	10%
Reflective paper on field-observation	30 pts	30%
Reflective Critical Issue research	30 pts	30%
Reflection papers	5 pts	5%
I and Thou Philosophy paper	5 pts	5%

Grading A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D = 60% - 69%; F = Below 60%

CLASS, DEPARTMENT, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As of July 1, 2017, “campus carry” is in effect at all public universities in Georgia. There are several restrictions to this law, which are explained at <http://www.usg.edu/hb280>. Answers to specific questions can be found under the “Additional Information” tab.

For important policy information on the UWG Honor Code, Email, and Credit Hour policies, as well as information on Academic Support and Online Courses, please review the information found in the **Common Language for Course Syllabi** documentation at http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf. Additions and updates are made as institution, state, and federal standards change, so please review it each semester. In addition to the above information, the following policies apply to this course.

Academic Honesty: All work completed in this course must be original work developed this semester. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses or purchases ghostwritten papers. It also occurs when a student utilizes ideas or information obtained from another person without giving credit to that person. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be

dealt with in accordance with the academic misconduct policy as stated in the latest *Student Handbook* and the *Graduate Catalog*.

Attendance: You are **expected to attend all classes**. Missing more than 2 classes **will lower your grade**.

Additional Support Information

Center for Academic Success

The [Center for Academic Success](#) (CAS) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. The CAS offers free appointment-based peer tutoring in core courses, as well as supplemental instruction (SI)—which is peer-facilitated collaborative learning—in a variety of disciplines. Students seeking help with study skills and strategies can attend workshops through the Academic Success Workshop series, or work individually with either a staff or peer Academic Coach. The Center for Academic Success is located in UCC 200, and can be reached at [678-839-6280](tel:678-839-6280) or the email address is cas@westga.edu.

UWG Cares

If you or someone you know is in a distressing situation, support is available at <http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>. The website contains access to helpful resources and phone numbers related to emergency or crisis situations and safety concerns, medical concerns, multicultural, psychological and personal issues and interpersonal conflict.

Student Services

Click on the following link [Student Services](#) for a listing of all services available to students at UWG.

CLASS OUTLINE & readings can be found at www.teacherrenewal.wikispaces.com

Class meets, Tuesdays from 5:30 to 8:30 in Room 186 in the Newnan Center

PART I The Profession

Jan 9 Introduction to the course and discussion of teacher education at UWG.

How does one look critically at education today? What are the influences shaping education today? From your own personal experiences what do you perceive as contemporary critical educational issues? Introduction to SPARK

PART II Historical background of education and philosophy

Jan 16 - 23 Theme: Truth, idealism, reality, education

What is real and what is an illusion? Plato's interpretations of shadows/images, light/dark, good/evil, reality/illusions. **Illustrate your interpretation of Plato's Allegory.** Read: Socrates & Plato.

Jan 30 Education and history

How do we teach history? What do you know about great men and women from the past? How have we responded to the great voices of the past?

Read: *Great Men and Women* by Jonathan Kozoll

Where did education get its roots? What were schools for in Colonial America? How was the purpose of schooling changing? **Read:** *Thinking Critically about History*, by Joel Spring.

Part III Issues in American Education

Feb 6 Theme: Reward systems and education

While it is a common educational practice, is it a good practice and who benefits most from

this practice? Read: *Is it Right to Reward* and *Is it Effective to Reward*, by Alfie Kohn in his book *Punished by Rewards*.

- Feb 13** **Theme: Education for oppression/liberation**
Is there a difference between schooling and education?
Can schools contribute to the process of human liberation?
Read: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire
- Feb 20** **Interview an educator**
What does teaching look like through the eyes of a teacher or administrator? Interview an educator. Ask them to describe some of the critical issues they face. Also, ask them to describe what keeps them from burning out. Submit this paper in the ASSIGNMENT Box
- Feb 27** **Theme: Radical cruelty/evil**
How do we respond to evil in society/in school? What do we learn in school about ourselves? What do we learn about the society we live in? Read: *The Kingdom of Auschwitz*, by Otto Friedric.
- *Mar 13** **Theme: Radical Love relationships. Read the *I and Thou* - by Martin Buber.**
Man's experience in relationship with the world, man, and God. How should teachers relate to students and the subject? **Write your critical reflection as to how this philosophy relates to your life and to education. DO NOT write your reflection until after we have met in class.**
Also, Read: *Buber* by Barich.
***This is a must attend class**
- Mar 27** **Theme: Competition in Education**
How do we understand competition in education? Is it a good motivator for learning? Read *Competition* by Alphe Kohn. **Write a reaction paper about the issues raised by Kohn about the use of competition in education.**
- Apr 3** **Theme: Testing. Testing, Testing**
Do conventional tests promote learning? How are students responding to testing being the focus of schooling? What is being sacrificed by our current form of testing?
Read: *The case against testing* AND *Overboard on testing*.
- Apr 10** **Theme: Bulling**
Find two (2) articles from journals or books on bulling and share them in class. **Summarize the articles along with your critical reflection and place it in the ASSIGNMENT box.**
- Apr 17** **Theme: Good Teaching**
What is teaching and learning? What does it mean to be a good teacher? For thought: What is the source of good teaching? Read: *The Heart of Teaching* by Parker Palmer. Critical Issue paper due Apr 17
- Apr 24** **Presentation of a critical issue**
May 1 **Presentation of a critical issue**