

Course Syllabus

COURSE NUMBER

EDUC 5220.03 COURSE TITLE: Contemporary Educational Issues TERM: Fall II 2005 SITE:

WGSD: 355

5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Tuesday

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Joseph Sartorius Ph.D.

CREDIT HOURS: 3

Course Description: This course is an introduction to educational foundations and will provide an overview of important educational topics past and current. The major goal is to identify and analyze educational issues through reading, writing, discussing, and presenting ideas in oral and written form. The course will explore relationships between current issues and historical perspectives, philosophical theories, and sociologic influences. Class participants will utilize higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as well as skills of listening to and considering various points of view.

1. Learning Outcomes:

Course Outcomes Program Goals SOE Goals, SOE Dispositions, and MoSTEP/Prof Standards Addressed

1. become familiar with, and demonstrate knowledge of, important thinkers who have influenced education philosophies and practices.

2. examine historical issues and relate them to current ones.

3. read, analyze, and synthesize written and electronic materials on current issues.

4. conduct an in-depth investigation of an educational issue and present findings and recommendations in written and oral form.

5. participate individually in class discussions and activities, and collaborate with classmates on assigned tasks.

MoStep 1.2.1.3, 1.2.2.2

MoStep 1.2.1.4, 1.2.4.1, 1.2.5.2, 1.2.7.1, 1.2.7.2

MoStep 1.2.1.2, 1.2.1.3, 1.2.1.4, 1.2.2.2, 1.2.5.2

MoStep 1.2.2.2, 1.2.5.2, 1.2.7.1

MoStep 1.2.1.2, 1.2.2.3, 1.2.7.1, 1.2.9.1, 1.2.10.1

Topical Overview, Activities, and Readings (subject to change)

Week 1. June 7, 2005

Introduction, expectations, overview of course; effective discussion strategies; developmental discussion; perspectives on a current issue; discussion of news articles; historical figures selection.

DUE: selection of historical figure (in class)

Week 2. June 14, 2005

Education in Colonial America and the Revolutionary Era; relevance to current issues; group discussion of news articles; resource exploration; library research orientation.

DUE: Read Gutek chapters 1 & 2.

IN PROGRESS: newspaper assignment
term project topic under consideration

Week 3. June 21, 2005

The Common School; alternative education; The Changing Landscape of U.S. Education; Gallup Poll; group discussion of readings and articles; individual reports.

DUE: Read Gutek chapters 3 & 4

term project topic approved

IN PROGRESS: newspaper assignment
article analyses
trends/patterns of current issues

Week 4. June 28, 2005

American Higher Education and Teacher Education; school culture and climate; school safety; school violence; group discussion of readings and articles; individual reports.

DUE: Read Gutek chapter 5 & 6.

Read assigned articles.

Newspaper assignment is due.

Two article analyses are due.

IN PROGRESS: Trends paper

Week 5. July 5, 2005

Education reform; school improvement; accountability; standards and assessment; group discussion of readings and articles; individual reports

DUE: Read Gutek chapter 7.

IN PROGRESS: Trends paper

Week 6. July 12, 2005

Education reform; Effective Schools; accountability; standards and assessment; group discussion of readings and articles; individual reports.

DUE: Read Gutek ch. 9 & pp. 229-233 "A Nation at Risk"& pp. 315-318 "Effective Schools."

Trends paper is due.

IN PROGRESS: term paper research

Week 7. July 19, 2005

The Recent Past; desegregation; diversity; poverty; group discussion of readings and articles; individual reports.

DUE: Read Gutek ch. 8 & pp. 299-302, Brown vs. Board of Education.

IN PROGRESS: term paper research

Week 8. July 26, 2005

Legal issues; special education; current trends; looking ahead; teaching as a profession; discussion of term projects; course summary.

DUE: Read Gutek chapter 10.

Term paper is due.

2. RESOURCES:

Required text: Gutek, G.L., An Historical Introduction to American Education. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 1991. Supplemental readings will be assigned from library materials, newspapers, journals, handouts, and other relevant materials.

3. EVALUATION: (basis of evaluation with explanation regarding the nature of the assignment and the percentage of the grade assigned to each item below)

(460 points possible)

Class participants will be evaluated on:

1. Class attendance, preparation, and participation, including reading and discussion of all assigned materials = 40 points
2. Oral presentation of an historical figure pertinent to education issues = 50 points
3. Ongoing newspaper assignment = 35 points
4. Two article analyses = 80 points (40 points each)
5. Trends paper = 55 points
6. Term project = 200 points

Deductions will be taken for late assignments.

Attendance at 7 of the 8 sessions is necessary in order to complete course requirements.

4. GRADING SCALE:

Grades in the M.A.T. program are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, I, and W; or CR, NC, I, and W. Grades reflect the following standards:

A, A- superior graduate work

B+, B, B- satisfactory graduate work

C marginal graduate work

CR satisfactory graduate work (the equivalent of B- or better)

NC unsatisfactory graduate work

I incomplete

W withdrawn from course

Note: ALL PAPERS/PROJECTS MAY BE RETURNED VIA A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE. PAPERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR PICK-UP IN THE SOE OFFICE.

5. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material.)

Students:

- Should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- Should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.
- Should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- Should follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association Style Guide when referencing all research sources.

For further information about the consequences of academic dishonesty please consult the Webster University Student Handbook.

6. ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMODATIONS POLICY:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center, Dr. Pat McLeese, at (314) 968-7495.

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Vision: “. . . We all must work to make this world worthy of its children.” (Casals, 1970)

Mission: The School of Education at Webster University provides its students with the knowledge, experiences, and practical tools that help them guide both themselves and others toward lifelong learning. The School of Education is a community of educator-scholars who apply critical reflections and creative energies to enhance learning in schools and other educational settings. The faculty strives to support this community by modeling effective teaching practices based on sound theory and research. Personalized approaches create a challenging, yet supportive environment that permits the risk-taking necessary for learning and growth. The School of Education encourages its faculty and students to work actively toward this end, keeping in mind that action must be rooted in visionary, yet realistic, thinking. This thought and action process underscores the development of an inner-directed self-understanding, an outer-directed global perspective, and an appreciation of human diversity that arises from both.

Theme: Developing a world of learners through knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning.

The universal mandala (a circle with intersecting vertical and horizontal lines) graphically represents the conceptual framework of the School of Education. The outer circle provides the framework for a “world of learners” in cultural settings. The two axes represent the theme components of knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning. These lines are broken to emphasize the fluid relationship of the goals and integrated concepts. Each quadrant represents one of the school’s four goals for its candidates: to develop knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators.

Goals

1. Education candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of pedagogy based on inquiry and scholarship.

The knowledgeable learner:

- 1.1 knows content that supports conceptual understanding;
- 1.2 applies tools of inquiry to construct meaningful learning experiences;
- 1.3 identifies developmental factors in student learning; and
- 1.4 understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.

2. Education candidates will incorporate multiple assessment and instructional strategies to support effective educational practices based on research and theory.

The informed instructor:

- 2.1 designs curriculum based on students’ prior knowledge, learning styles, strengths, and needs;
- 2.2 understands and uses a range of instructional strategies;
- 2.3 uses a variety of communication modes, media, and technology to support student learning; and
- 2.4 employs a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor learning and modify instruction.

3. Education candidates will reflect on the roles educators take as leaders of change through collaboration with colleagues, students, and families in schools and communities.

The reflective collaborator:

- 3.1 values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional;
- 3.2 promotes communication and collaboration with colleagues, families, and community leaders;
- 3.3 seeks relationships with families and students to support student learning; and

3.4 initiates change that benefits students and their families.

4. Education candidates will demonstrate respect for diversity through responsive teaching and learning that values individual differences.

The responsive educator:

- 4.1 understands and responds appropriately to issues of diversity
- 4.2 acknowledges social and cultural contexts to create effective teaching and learning environments;
- 4.3 adapts instruction to the learner's knowledge, ability, and background experience; and
- 4.4 identifies resources for specialized services when needed.

Dispositions:

NCATE defines dispositions as "the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. " (Professional Standards, p. 53) There is significant value in focusing attention on qualities that make an effective teacher.

- 1. Understands and Respects Self
 - 1.1 Understands and respects that s (he) may be different from others
 - 1.2 Embraces an openness to change (adaptability, flexibility)
 - 1.3 Exhibits curiosity
 - 1.4 Engages in reflection
- 2. Understands and Respects Others
 - 2.1 Understands, respects, and responds appropriately to diversity in a variety of settings
 - 2.2 Exhibits empathy
 - 2.3 Commits to fairness and honesty
 - 2.4 Listens respectfully to other points of view
- 3. Understands and Respects Professional Communities
 - 3.1 Commits to professional behavior in university and school cultures
 - 3.2 Practices informed decision-making in university and school cultures
 - 3.3 Communicates and collaborates in university and school cultures
 - 3.4 Accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/ high expectations)
 - 3.5 Affects change with courage and confidence

Supplements

Outlines/requirements for the following tasks are included in this syllabus:

- (1) News Analysis, (2) Historical Figures Presentation, (3) Term Project

(1) NEWS ANALYSIS

The news analysis assignments are designed to:

- increase awareness of current events and issues relevant to education,
- encourage analysis of events, issues, and trends relevant to education,
- examine news media coverage of events and issues in education.

A. Collect articles. From newspapers or news media, read and collect **15-20 articles** about issues pertaining

to education. Organize into a notebook, binder, scrapbook, etc. On **1-2** sheets of paper, record the following:

1. your name
2. your sources - names of newspapers or news media
3. dates of monitoring
4. total number of articles pertaining to education
5. list of all educational issues addressed in your articles
6. Narrative: Can you link any of these issues with any historical issues from readings and/or class discussion? (Hint: "No" would not be a good answer to this question!) Give evidence from the articles and readings/class discussions to support the "links." It is expected that you will be able to link 2-3 issues in the articles with one or more historical issues.
7. Include a reference page citing all articles collected. Use APA format.

DUE: Week 4. Be prepared to share and discuss your findings. (35 points)

B. Analyze two articles. Select 2 **articles** from your newspaper clippings to analyze in depth. Submit a **one-page** (double-spaced) analysis on **each article**, and address each point below.

1. Identify the article by publication, date, title, and page number.
2. Summarize the article content.
3. Describe how schools (other than those in the article) currently address the topic.
4. Speculate on how schools might need to change in order to fully respond to the issues raised by the article. Give rationale for your speculation.
5. Evaluate the national priority of this topic. Cite evidence to support.
6. Evaluate the reporting. Is there evidence of balanced reporting? Can you cite bias and/or faulty reasoning by the writer? Support your observations by citing word choices, style of reporting, placement of the article, etc.

DUE: Week 4. Be prepared to share and discuss your findings. (40 points each)

C. Analyze one trend of current issues. After collecting all of the articles in assignment A (above), review the material you have collected, and submit an analytical summary (2 pages total) of one important issue that you identify from your articles. Address the points below:

1. Name **1 major issue** relevant to education covered in the material you collected.
 - a. Briefly summarize the issue.
 - b. Explain your rationale for selecting this issue by citing the frequency of coverage, length of articles, depth and balance of reporting, etc.
2. Analyze the coverage.
 - a. Describe what kind of image of education the news media is projecting by their coverage of this major issue.
 - b. Give evidence from the articles to support your contention.
3. Recommendations
 - a. What recommendations for action can you suggest for an individual to create a greater impact on information the public receives about this issue?
 - b. What recommendations can you suggest for a school staff?
 - c. What recommendations can you suggest for a school district?
4. Include the same reference page from newspaper assignment A (above).

DUE: Week 6. Be prepared to share and discuss your findings. (55 points)

(2) HISTORICAL FIGURE PRESENTATION

The purposes of this assignment are:

- to explore the biography of and issues faced by significant historical figures in education,
- to determine their contributions to education,
- to make connections with current educational issues.

The assignment involves an oral presentation and a one-page outline based on research. The steps below will help in preparing the report.

1. Select one historical figure from the list provided by the Instructor (Week 1).
2. Find and review material about your figure. Use any reference materials including biographies, original writings by the historical figure, and histories of education. Develop a reference list using APA format.
3. Study the individual's life for information pertinent to educational issues dealt with by that person in his/her time period. Use the following questions as guidelines:

- a. What were the important factors in this person's life?
- b. What was the nature of the national debate on education, and what were other important issues of that time?
- c. What was the involvement of the historical figure in education and/or national issues?
- d. Why was this person's work significant then, and why is it significant today?

4. Speculate on the following questions. (Note that these questions are inferential, thus you may not find answers to them in your materials.)

- a. What evidence of this historical figure's work/influence do you see in education today?
- b. Identify one or more contemporary educational issues similar to issues faced by this historical figure. Speculate on how your historical figure would respond to this (these) current issue(s). Give reasons/evidence to support your conclusions.
- c. In what ways are the characteristics of contemporary American education (or culture) similar to and different from the educational or societal context during the period of this historical figure?

5. Summarize using any personal understandings you may have reached after studying this person.

6. In preparing your presentation, be creative with the format. Do not read your report to the class.

Be sure that:

- (a) the format of your presentation effectively communicates your materials,
- (b) it is interesting to the class,
- (c) you have a one-page outline and reference list with copies for each class member, (d) you keep within the 15-minute time limit.

(3) TERM PROJECT

The term project gives you the opportunity to explore an educational issue of interest to you. The project should take the form of a research paper, i.e. an in-depth analysis of a specific question or issue, using books, journal articles, web sites, and other resources. Use the guidelines below for selecting a topic and organizing your report.

Guidelines for term project

1. Select a topic and develop a research question. Be specific in your topic selection so that the issue is not vague, yet may apply to various situations. In other words, the topic must be broad enough to cover a variety of situations and be generalizable, but narrow enough to be accomplished in an eight week course. A topic that is too broad may result in data overload, while one that is too narrow may yield insufficient data from which to draw your research. The topic may be a current, historical, or philosophical issue relevant to the field of education. The Instructor must approve the topic and research question by week 3.

2. Develop a reading list on the topic. Include books, journal articles, and information from the world-wide web. Various bibliographies and ERIC CIJE (Current Index to Journal in Education) in the library will assist you in finding relevant materials. Use the content from the original articles (full text), not summaries or abstracts. (See <http://library.webster.edu/database.htm>.) Include current and historical sources.

3. Format – The paper should be a total of 12-15 pages in length excluding title page and reference pages. It should be typed (word processor), double-spaced with 12-point standard font, 1-inch margins on all sides, and stapled. (No plastic covers, no faxed papers, no e-mail papers). Type in headings for each section (e.g. Introduction, Review of the Literature, etc.) of the paper.

Outline of Term Project

A. Graphic organizer (semantic web) of the content of the project (1 page).

B. Introduction (1-2 pages)

1. Describe your topic and research question.
2. Rationale: Why is this topic compelling? Why is the topic important to the field of education?
3. Nature of the controversy: Describe the debate regarding your topic, and state the various opinions.

C. Review of the Literature (5-7 pages)

From the literature review, describe the viewpoints on your question. Limit the review to points relevant to your topic. Organize your literature review in some consistent fashion, e.g. themes, sources, historical time periods, pro versus con, etc.

D. Critique and Discussion (4-6 pages)

1. Analysis and synthesis:

- Analyze the content of the Literature Review.
 - Synthesize a position on the issues based on your study.
 - Cite evidence/examples from the research to support your thinking.
2. Link the historical issues and historical figures discussed in class with your topic where they naturally fit. This should be two to four links and should comprise only one page of the discussion.

E. Conclusions and Recommendations (1-2 pages)

1. Based on your study, what conclusions can you draw?
2. Answer your research question, citing evidence from your study.
3. What recommendations can you make for educators, educational systems, and other persons of influence?

F. Bibliography (1-2 pages) of at least 10 sources including books, periodicals, historical research, and current research. Use APA format.

G. Optional: Any appendices, if necessary or appropriate, including diagrams, charts, etc.

Note: Grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, spelling, and accurate reference citations are very important. Be sure to proofread and edit.

Additional Information Concerning Final Projects

The term paper is **due week 8, July 26, 2005**. You have several options:

- a. If you would like to have your graded paper mailed to you, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope **with sufficient postage**.
- b. If you do not wish to have your paper returned but would like a postcard with final grades mailed to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed postcard.
- c. You may elect to wait for the university grade report.

Note: Papers will not be available for pick-up from the School of Education Office.

Additional Information Concerning Class

Regular class attendance is required. Missing more than 1 class will result in withdrawal from the course.

Inclement Weather: In the event of hazardous weather conditions, the following radio stations will announce school closing information for Webster University: WIL 92.3 FM, Y98 98.1 FM, KMOX 1120 AM, WRTH 1430 AM, KTRS 550 AM, and TV Channels 2, 4, 5, and 30.

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.