



## Education 150, Education in American Culture – Spring 2006

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## SYLLABUS

"Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men (and women) pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other." Paulo Freire

### INITIAL THOUGHTS

If you think you have all of the answers about school and teaching, this is not the course for you. This is a course about questioning and uncertainty. It is built on the premise that learning needs to be a response to the asking of important questions. Here are five of the key questions we will explore in this class:

1. What is your vision of an excellent teacher?
2. What forces outside of the classroom affect what a teacher does?
3. Given these forces, how can teachers sustain their vision?
4. How can teachers shape the world around them which is trying so desperately to shape them?
5. How are contemporary forces grounded in the historical development of schools?

You should feel free to add to this list.

I will not be giving you the answers to these questions. Rather, we will be researching these questions together, with the hope of discovering answers. I will share some understandings with you concerning the historical and philosophical background of these issues. You will go out into the real world of schools and schooling to further explore these questions. By the end of the semester, I can promise you will have less certainty and a lot more questions. Don't fret. You will have an entire career to find the answers.

### GOALS

1. Gain a knowledge of basic teaching approaches.
2. Formulate your personal teaching approach.
3. Acquire a historical perspective, reflect on the history of Education in America.
4. Experience the reality of the classroom.
5. Gain incites into current topics in Education.
6. My intent is to **inform**, **inspire**, and **encourage** you.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

*Approaches to Teaching* (4th edition) by Gary Fenstermacher and Jonas F. Soltis

*School and Society - Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (5th edition) by Tozer, Violas, Senese

*To Teach - The Journey of a Teacher* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) by William Ayers

## EXPECTATIONS

- Attend all classes
- Complete all reading before the scheduled class
- Hand in assignments on time
- Bring to class the text we are studying
- Engage in class discussion and activities
- Respect the opinions of others

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance at every class is expected. Be on time and stay in class for the full session. Classes will begin and end on time. It is distracting when students arrive late or leave early.

Since the issues being considered in the course require informed discussion and involvement, you are expected to attend every class with a basic/clear understanding of the assigned reading and with questions to be raised about it. Keep in touch with me. If you must be absent from a particular class, it is your responsibility to secure any materials that may have been distributed or any assignments made for subsequent classes. Absence is not an excuse for missed work. E-mail me before or immediately after an absence with an explanation, otherwise your absence will be coded unexcused.

If circumstances arise that keep you from completing an assignment when it is due, you should discuss the situation with me. I have provided my office phone number and an E-mail address so you can contact me. I will be on campus on days when we have class from 12 o'clock noon on.

Missing more than three classes will be a signal to me of a serious problem. At that point, you should consider withdrawing from the course. You can not pass this course without attending class! If you miss more than eight classes for ANY reason, **I will withdraw you** from the course!

Please silence all pagers and cell phones upon entering class. Put **AWAY** all electronic communication devices.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Your papers are out of class assignments. This permits you to discuss your ideas with other members of the class and to do the necessary reading and writing in whatever environment you find conducive. Such discussions do not constitute plagiarism, which is the presentation of someone else's work as your own, even when the discussions produce points of view which have something in common with other students. The College's position on academic honesty is clear. For written work to be acceptable, its final form must be the produce of your own thought and effort. Anything else is of no value as a measure of your effort and understanding and will receive no recognition. If the work of others is quoted or paraphrased in your papers, cite that source with some standard bibliographic notation. Refer to the complete College Academic Honesty Policy in the student handbook.

## EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE

As you know from signing up for a lab, you will be going out into the schools. The field experience will begin Monday, February 13, 2006 and will end Friday, April 28, 2006. You will be going out for approximately four hours a week. This will give you exposure to the "real world" so that you can make some connections between what we are studying and "reality." Yes, there is a link.

If you are currently taking ED 155, you will receive one placement for the two courses. We will make placements, most likely in Bethlehem's school district. You must withdraw from Ed. 150 if you are withdrawn from your EFE experience! You must attend an informational meeting on 1/18 at 5PM or 1/19 at 11:45 AM. More will be said later about this experience.

## COURSE GRADE

1. Annotated Article (2%)
2. Essays (15%, 10%,)
3. Research Project (30%)
4. Attendance (4%) and class participation (4%)
5. Homework: (18%); EFE Graph (1%); "To Teach" Lesson and Discussion (3%); School Board Meeting Summary (2%)
5. Journal: (6%)
6. Successful Completion of Field Experience: (5%)

Preserve all work for Ed 150 on a disk.

It is within this instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining all grades for this course.

This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor.

## ASSESSMENTS

**If you miss class when assignments are due, they may be handed into the Ed. Department secretary on the third floor of the PPHAC or placed in the wire basket outside of my office. Don't e-mail them! All assignments are to be typed in font size #14.**

## ANNOTATED ARTICLE

The purpose of this assignment is for you to develop current knowledge on educational issues, share your knowledge and opinions, and listen to the opinions of others.

*Selecting an article:* You may select an article from magazines, journals, newspapers, or web sites. Articles from magazines, journals, and newspapers must be copied or mounted on white 8 ½ by 11 inch paper and handed in with the assignment. Articles from web sites must be printed out and handed in with the assignment. Articles should be from 2004 to 2006. Articles must relate to K-12 education in America.

*Writing about the article:* When typing, double-space the summary and personal response. Use font size 14. You do not need to create a title page. At the top right of the page single-space your name, section, "Annotated Article ", title of the article, source of the article, and date of the article. You will write two paragraphs. In the first paragraph you will summarize the article. Be succinct. In the second paragraph you will write your response to and feelings about the article. Write about your own beliefs, thoughts, solutions, and or frustrations regarding the subject matter. The header and two paragraphs should all fit on one piece of paper, without exception.

*Handing in the article:* Put your written paper on top followed by the pages of the article. Staple the report in the top left corner.

## Possible Article Topics

- local educational issue of importance
- separation of church and state
- book banning
- dress codes
- assessment, testing
- finances, taxes
- non-public schools

You may select any one question at the end of each chapter assigned in School and Society to respond to in writing. These responses will serve as your weekly active inquiring into important questions about the purposes and consequences of education and schooling and as a spring-board for small group discussions. They are to be handed in for credit. This assignment will not be accepted after the class during which these questions are discussed. Word process these assignments in font size #14. Single space responses using a maximum of one page. Include the chapter number and the question number in the heading.

## TESTS

You will have no tests.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Attend a school board meeting in the Lehigh Valley. Take notes on all topics discussed and all decisions made. Note who from the community comes to speak to the board and what issues they address. If there is another district board you are interested in, call the administrative office in that district for meeting times and places. Hand in the agenda, summary and personal response when due. Include a summary and personal response to this meeting in the appendix of your research project along with an agenda only if you reference your summary in your research paper.

## CLASS PRESENTATION

You will be asked to team teach a chapter from Bill Ayers To Teach, our last textbook. Cover the content in the chapter and engage the class. Go beyond lecture and be interactive. Create a power point presentation to be printed out and handed in. Consider using handouts and doing activities with your “students”. The lesson should be about ten minutes.

## ESSAY #1: APPROACHES TO TEACHING

Paper Questions: *What is your preferred approach to teaching? Why do you prefer that approach?*

Choose an approach to teaching. Describe it and defend why it is an optimum approach. You may choose one of the five general approaches described by Fenstermacher and Soltis. You may also create your own approach to teaching. If you choose one from F & S, then take a paragraph to describe the approach. Take one or two paragraphs to show me what it

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might look like in your classroom. Be descriptive. Discuss the “MAKER Framework” as it applies to your approach. The remainder of your

paper should be used to defend the approach.

Remember you are trying to convince me as to why this approach is preferred. You could defend your approach through other readings (see back of F & S), through your experience (especially in schools), or through logical arguing. I want to understand your position about teaching and why you have chosen it.

In addition to your ability to describe and defend your approach, you will be evaluated on your overall structure. The paper should be about three pages long. Please double space using font #14.

## ESSAY #2: VALUES

Your answer should represent your best efforts, and be well organized, articulate written expression. Errors in mechanics will detract from your grade. Limit your answer to three or four paragraphs (a maximum of two pages, double-spaced). Word process your answers in a font size no less than 14 (this text)! Be sure to put your name in the top right corner of the paper.

Answers should be an expression of original thinking based on what you have learned from texts, lectures, newspaper articles, and articles from professional publications which you have read during this course. **Don't neglect to actually answer the questions!**

The strength and richness of the United States lies in its diversity. What is uniquely American is intentionally a combination of the best of the cultures of all of our citizens. Assimilation vs. Pluralism, a Melting Pot Culture vs. A Mosaic culture; are Democracy and Diversity compatible? Schools can make a significant difference in the lives of students and are the key to maintaining a society that is free, democratic and diverse. In an effort to create a unified nation to which all citizens have allegiance, how will you, in your future classroom, put into practice the principles of Multicultural Education? Is Diversity within Democracy possible?

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## RESEARCH PROJECT

I. Introduction

Teachers are overwhelmed with forces which bombard their work in the classroom. Autocratic principals, a community that does not want to spend money on education, and students who watch electronic monitors instead of doing homework, are forces which can all work to shipwreck the teacher, sometimes causing burnout. As new teachers entering the profession, you need to make yourself aware of factors which may affect your work. Good teachers learn how to consider and work with outside forces while still maintaining their educational vision. Otherwise, they risk burning out or becoming mediocre by "getting through the day".

This research project is designed for you to focus on an important educational problem of interest to you so that you can discover and construct your own knowledge.

The paper should not be one you have used for another course or a paper prepared by someone else.

II. Place in the front of your project a title page. Your paper should begin with a thesis statement on a separate piece of paper and be identified as such. This should be more than a single sentence. Don't repeat this at the beginning of the paper. Your paper is a **referenced response** to one question. It should include at least 15 citations. Don't use plastic sleeves for the FOCUS!

1) *What is one of the most powerful forces affecting the teacher's work in the classroom? [The force you choose could be either social (business involvement in school; atmosphere of violence) or organizational (charter schools; block scheduling; ability grouping).]* (about fifteen pages)

2) A works cited list or reference list (APA style is preferred, but any consistent system is acceptable.) Place this immediately after your paper.

3) An appendix to include newspaper articles, web site pages, educational journal articles, books and a teacher interview.

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III. Research

1. Newspapers: Use any local newspaper or newspapers (*Morning Call, Express Times*, a newspaper from where you currently live). Find, read, cut out, photocopy or download your topic articles. The

articles must be current, that is from 2004 to the present. **Include a table of contents.**

2. Educational Journals: Your reference section must include at least five journal articles (the complete articles). The source must be cited in the text of the paper. Journals you use must have been published in January 2002 or later. The following are good sources and are available in Reeves Library: *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Education Week*, *Educational Leadership*,
3. *Education Digest*, *NEA Today*, *Eric Digest*. Other education journals could be acceptable as well, but you should check with me before you plunge into reading. **Include a table of contents.**
4. Websites may be used: Print out your information. **Include a table of contents.**
5. Books and other sources: Print a copy of the title page. **Include a table of contents.**
6. Teacher Interview: You must interview one teacher currently teaching in the public schools. It may be the cooperating teacher you are working with. You need to design your own interview questions but remember, your research study is an examination of one of the most powerful social or organizational factors influencing the classroom teacher, so shape your interview accordingly. You are also interested in how that factor influences the teacher and how the teacher tries to counteract that force. State the name of the person interviewed.

You are encouraged to show me a copy of your interview questions before you intend to do the interview. I can give you feedback.

If you are a fast note taker, you might want to take notes while you do the interview. Otherwise, I would encourage you to use some type of tape recorder, with the teacher's permission.

### **Interview Guidelines:**

a. Think about what this paper is all about. Frame your questions to help you find out some more things about this topic. You are inviting teachers to participate in your inquiry.

b. Make sure your questions are clear and focused. Try them out on friends and family. If you find yourself getting answers, which aren't useful, go back and look at what you are asking.

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c. Warm-up your interviewee with a question that gets them to talking in the right direction. Teachers, for instance, would find it easy to talk about the community they teach in or their students. You could ask, "What is the community like in which you teach?"



d. Start general. For instance, it would be a good idea to ask a question like this early on: "What are some of the broad social factors which affect your work as a teacher?" If they don't mention it, you can ask then specifically about your force.

e. If your questions are good, you won't need to plan more than 7 or 8 questions.

f. Be ready to probe. That is, if an interviewee identifies what seems to be a force, get them to talk about it more by asking questions like: "What do you mean by.....?" You could also ask, "If I were to visit your class, in what ways might I see this force operating?"

g. Include both the questions and responses in your project. Question#1 should be **bolded** and followed by response #1.

#### IV. Paper Referencing and Appendix

Your paper will be referenced. That is, you will be gathering hard data and you must cite your data resources in the text of the paper as well as a reference list at the end of the paper. The citation will be of your own invention, but it should include at least author and page. In-text citations should be placed within parenthesis ( ) and be bolded. You need to have a list of all references or works cited at the end of your paper. Categorize this list according to the type of resource. Italicize all quotations.

#### V. General Criteria for Paper

Overall, I want to see how effectively you can support claims you make with information you have gathered

##### 1. "General Criteria for Writing"

- a. An ability to present and support broad ideas. That means including a clear thesis statement, which will govern the central ideas running through the paper.
- b. Coherent paragraphs which develop main ideas flowing from your main thesis.
- c. An ability to move from ideas to concrete support or demonstration of those ideas. That means careful definition of terms which you present and adequate support for positions that you take.
- d. Clarity as reflected in carefully crafted sentences and appropriate word choice.

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- e. Originality, creativity, and signs of heartfelt ideas.
  - f. Appropriate grammar and spelling.
2. An ability to effectively use information you have gathered to support your claims.

3. The quality of the information you have gathered.
4. The project is due by Thursday, \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

Here's some advice. I encourage you to show me early drafts of your paper!  
Purchase a 1 ½ inch, three ringed binder early. Use section tabs.  
[All papers will be double-spaced and word processed in font size #14!]

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**EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE**

## PURPOSE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE

The field experience serves several functions:

1. It gives you a chance to experience the real world of schools and teaching. This will help you decide whether or not teaching is the career for you.
2. It gives you some bottom line experience with teaching. As you take more education courses, you can begin to examine what you are learning (methods) in relation to real teaching experiences. You will have a better knowledge of students. You will be able to ask informed questions based on the experience. For example, if you are presented with a certain method you can ask whether or not such an approach would work with students you encountered in the field.
3. In terms of ED 150 it gives you a chance to place your experiences into a historical and philosophical context. That means, you will be relating what you are learning in class to the real world of schooling. Yes, What we are doing does indeed have something to do with reality. This experience will allow you to ground your philosophy and your personal philosophy statement in actual school life and in your own experience as a teacher.

## ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD

There are three things I would like to have you do in the field.

1. Teaching: Your primary task should be working with students in some educational capacity. Primarily, you should work with individual students or small groups. You could help them with basic skills such as in reading groups and math groups. You could work with students on special projects. You could work individually with them on worksheets or writing assignments. These are meant to serve as examples of the sorts of things you could do. In some instances, you might work with the whole class. This should be the exception and not the rule. Whole class work should be done only when you feel ready and if the cooperating teacher is present.
2. Observation: You should be spending some time observing your cooperating teacher and other teachers in the building.

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3. Conversation: Talk to your cooperating teacher and other teachers in the building. Find out their perceptions of their job. Find out what they think about teaching, their students, and other issues of concern.

Upon completion of your early field experience you will hand in two pie graphs indicating your activities. If you can not attend a field placement for

40 hours you can not take this course.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

You are guests in the school. You are walking into somebody else's turf and you should respect it. Certain things related to department are necessary.

- 1) Dress appropriately. For men, that means a coat and tie. For women, dress professionally. See separate dress code.
- 2) Attendance is crucial. *If you fail to be at your placement during your scheduled time without calling your teacher, you will be pulled from the field assignment. Your grade for the course will be dropped two letters.* In addition, failure to meet attendance obligations could jeopardize your participation in the teacher education program. That's how serious this one is. If you are sick, you need to do what all professional teachers do, contact someone. In your case, you need to call the education office #861-1558 and leave a message. More importantly, you need to call your co-op. Call your co-op as soon as you reasonably can. (If you know in the morning you won't be able to attend, call the school as early as you can. Early means whenever the school day starts for the teacher.)
- 3) You are preservice teachers. The students call you Mr., Miss, Mrs. or Ms.
- 4) You will need to help the cooperating teacher carve out a niche for you in their classroom. Some will have a good idea from the start how you can be useful in the classroom. For others, you may not fit as easily into the classroom ecology. Most cooperating teachers appreciate when our students are assertive (without being pushy). That means, if you see some way you could work with students that might be helpful, offer your services to the cooperating teacher.
- 5) Ultimately, it is their classroom and they need to determine where you fit in.

## JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT FOR FIELD EXPERIENCE

You should create a journal entry for each visit you make to your classroom. Your observations should make note of teaching style, lesson content, personal involvement, student responses, classroom p. 3 EFE

management techniques, classroom setting, personal questions and thinking. Each weeks' entries are to be double-spaced and word processed in font size #14 and dated separately. Journals are due to me at the first class following each of the ten weeks.

Save this and all your work for ED 150 on a disk in the event that your assignments are not returned to you.

If any EFE visits are missed for any reason (college break, teacher inservice, holidays, field trips or your illness) they are to be made up by you

through additional visits or extended visits for a total of at least 40 hours. Your attendance needs to be recorded on an attendance sheet kept by your coop.

Each week's entries should be headed as follows:

Your Name  
Ed 150 (A or B) Mr. Weisel  
Journal Entry #1 and #2  
Grade Level or Subject

Date: Entry

Date: Entry

Supply your cooperating teacher with a copy of this syllabus. Also supply your coop with a letter of introduction.

At about midway through this early field experience ask your cooperating teacher to sit down with you and go over the EFE evaluation tool so that you both have a common understanding of your progress and one another's expectations.

During week nine of the EFE remind your coop to mail in your evaluation ASAP. They may supply you with a photocopy if they choose.

Name:

Topic:

Date handed in:

Grade:

## RESEARCH PROJECT Spring 2006

- 1 Cover Page
- 2 Table of Contents
- 5 Thesis Statement
- 62 FOCUS
- 5 Works Cited List
- 15 Appendix
  - Newspaper Articles
  - Educational Journal Articles
  - Web sites
  - Books and other
- 10 Teacher Interview

- Section tabs
- Bolded citations in FOCUS
- Some material not typed
- Project handed in late
- Lack of proofreading
- Poor Grammar
- Extras

### COMMENTS:

## **Education 150, Education in American Culture**

George Weisel

### SOME SOCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL FORCES AFFECTING EDUCATION

- . School Choice
- . Private Schools
- . Charter Schools
- . Home Schooling
- Inclusion
- IST
- Ability Grouping
- Community

- . Year-round School
  - . Teaching Values
  - . Teachers' Salaries
  - . Teacher Unions
  - . National Tests
  - . National Standards
  - . Standardized Testing
  - . Block Scheduling
  - . Violence in Schools
  - . Community Violence
  - . Curriculum Development
  - . State Regulations
  - . Technology
  - . Strategies for Successful Homework
  - . Education Budget
  - . Teacher strikes
  - . Instructional Adaptations
  - . Art and Music Education
  - . Overcrowding
  - . Bilingual Education
  - . Community and Business Involvement in Schools
  - . Cultural Diversity
  - . Discrimination
  - . Taxpayer Associations
  - . NEA - PSEA
  - . Authentic Assessment
  - . Multiple Intelligence
  - . Religion and the Public Schools
- School Laws
  - Vouchers
  - State Takeovers
  - For Profit Schools
  - Class Size
  - Teacher Mentors
  - Dress Codes
  - School Security
  - Student Apathy
  - No Child Left Behind Legislation
  - Teacher Accountability
  - Evolution vs. Creationism
  - Gender Bias