

**MORAVIAN COLLEGE**  
**Ed 328: SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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*The present divorce between scholarship and method is as harmful upon one side as upon the other -- as detrimental to the best interests of higher academic instruction as it is to the training of teachers. But the only way in which this divorce can be broken down is by so presenting all subject-matter, for whatever ultimate, practical, or professional purpose, that it shall be apprehended as an objective embodiment of methods of mind in its search for, and transactions with, the truth of things.*

John Dewey  
"The Relation of Theory and Practice in Education"

The purpose of this course is to introduce you through practical example to the "methods of mind" which children need to develop to become scholars, social scientists, problem-solvers, and citizens. My goal is to design, and have you design, a series of activities and experiences which incorporate the most important of these methods. The course will thus be project-oriented. Most class sessions will involve discussion of the material, small-group problem-solving, or your presentation of learning experiences for children. Attendance and participation are thus important to your success in the course.

**Course Objectives:**

- The student will, in cooperative groups, develop and teach individual lessons that are consistent with Pennsylvania state standards, that are developmentally appropriate, and that illustrate the most effective social studies instructional strategies.
- The student will practice methods and strategies designed to help elementary-level children think critically, solve problems, and make reasoned decisions.
- The student will develop a thematic unit plan that is integrative and interdisciplinary in scope, and is developmentally appropriate for the children for whom the instruction is designed.
- The student will examine social studies resources in print, in the community, and on the internet.
- The student will incorporate traditional print and internet resources into lesson plans and a unit plan.
- The student will examine the relationship of several developmental theories to social studies instruction.
- The student will develop strategies for improving the reliability and validity of teacher-made assessment instruments.
- The student will write a summative essay articulating her/his instructional philosophy related to the teaching of social studies.

**Required Text:**

Parker, W. C. Social Studies in Elementary Education. 2005: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

**Evaluation Policy:**

Each assignment will be given a letter or numerical grade based on a 100 point scale, and will have the following weight when determining your final course grade:

Integrated Thematic Unit Plan	30%
Cooperative Research Reports and Presentations	20% (10% each)
Cooperative Class Presentation	25%
Summative Essay	10%
Practicum Portfolio	10%
Class Attendance/Participation	5%

The following grade conversions will be used in determining your recorded letter grade for the course:

94 - 100 = A	74 - 76 = C
90 - 93 = A-	70 - 73 = C-
87 - 89 = B+	67 - 69 = D+
84 - 86 = B	64 - 66 = D
80 - 82 = B-	60 - 63 = D-
77 - 79 = C+	0 - 59 = F

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

***Integrated Thematic Unit Plan (30%)***

You will develop a complete unit plan on a theme and grade level of your choice, but related to a specific State standard. Additional information, including a detailed rubric, will be distributed in class.

***Cooperative Research Reports (2 at 10% each)***

You will cooperatively develop two research reports, each (roughly) five pages long, and a 10- to 15-minute oral report. The first research/oral report will be concerned with the relationship of developmental theories to instructional design in the social studies. Developmental theories that will be reviewed include those of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner, and Howard Gardner. The second research report will focus on a specific instructional methodology and will span two class sessions. The methodologies to be examined include cooperative learning, concept teaching, inquiry teaching, questioning skills, direct instruction, using a textbook, simulation, and role playing. Each presentation, both written and oral, should be divided into the following sections with a specific member of the team designated to complete each section. The sections include:

- An explanation and general overview of the developmental theory or instructional strategy;
- An explanation of the instructional implications of the theory or strategy;
- A review of the research results related to the theory or strategy: how effective is it?
- A sample lesson plan that incorporates the theory or strategy;
- An organized classroom presentation of the findings. A PowerPoint presentation is encouraged, but not required.

***Class Presentation (25%)***

You will be responsible, as part of a team, for developing a 70-minute presentation to the class related to teaching a social studies lesson. The objectives of the presentation are to:

- clarify the relevant state standard(s) for the class;
- discuss related readings (from Parker as well as those you've distributed in advance);
- explain how the lesson is developmentally appropriate;

- explain why the learning strategy you've selected is appropriate to your objective;
- teach the lesson to demonstrate the strategy and to have the lesson evaluated by your peers.

Your presentation will be in two parts: a hard-copy handout distributed at least one class session before the presentation, and the presentation itself. The handout must contain:

- A brief description of the content of the lesson (the five themes of geography, for example) and the relevant Pennsylvania State Standard and NCSS theme.
- Reference to specific pages in the Parker text to be read before the presentation;
- Copies of other related readings, when appropriate;
- A formal lesson plan describing the learning activity;
- A list of published resources relevant to the topic, including resources not necessarily used in the lesson to be presented.
- A list of internet resources relevant to the topic, including resources not necessarily used in the lesson to be presented.

Your team's in-class presentation will include a 10 to 20 minute introduction that begins with:

- a discussion of the assigned reading;
- a discussion of the relevance of the lesson selected to the PA State Standards and the NCSS themes;
- a discussion of the developmental appropriateness of the lesson you've selected for the target grade level;
- a discussion of the rationale for the specific methodology (role-playing, inquiry, etc.) selected;
- a review of the lesson plan with a particular focus on the relationship between the objective and the assessment strategy;
- a review of resources available (published and on the internet) related to your standard(s) or theme.

A PowerPoint presentation is encouraged for the first part of your team's presentation, but isn't required.

The introductory session will be followed by the demonstration lesson. All members of the team should be somehow involved in the demonstration lesson. The materials distributed in advance will be valued at 10% of your final grade, and the in-class presentation at 15%.

### ***Summative Essay (10%)***

The purpose of the summative essay (some may see this as a take-home final) is to reflect on and integrate all of the readings, discussions and experiences into a philosophy statement on some of the most important issues in the teaching of social studies. The essay will take the form of a dialog between you, a candidate for a fourth grade teaching position, and an interview team. I hope this activity will be useful to you in formulating articulate and precise perspectives that you can use in the course of an interview for a teaching position. The interview team's half of the dialog is attached to the end of the syllabus. Your job is to provide your, the candidate's, responses.

### ***Practicum Portfolio (10%)***

Unlike the other "professional block" courses, there is no requirement that you teach a minimum number of social studies lessons (since you may or may not be present when your coop is teaching social studies). Ten percent of your final grade, however, will be determined by the quality of your performance in your pre-student teaching experience, and by the quality of your professional portfolio.

### ***Attendance/Participation (10%)***

Each unexcused absence from class will result in the reduction of the attendance portion of your final grade by one grade level. One absence, for example, would result in a grade of 85% for the attendance/participation portion (10%) of your overall grade. **An unexcused absence from your practicum experience will result in termination of the experience and a grade of F in the course.**

### **Practicum Requirements:**

Moravian College's Teacher Certification Program requires a minimum of two field experiences prior to acceptance

for student teaching. **The Early Field Experience** involves a minimum of 40 hours in an elementary classroom. Most will have completed this through ED 150, ED 155, and/or ED 226. The **Pre-Student Teaching Experience** requires a minimum of 90 hours, and can be completed only after or concurrently with ED 325, Mathematics in the Elementary School, and ED 326, Literacy II. Formal class meetings for this course will end, along with those for ED 325 and ED 326, after Friday, March 17. Most of you, for the balance of the semester, will use scheduled class time to complete your Pre-Student Teaching Experience. If Social Studies is the only course for which you are registered, but you have completed the other two courses, you can complete the Pre-Student Teaching experience at this time. If, however, you have not completed the other two courses, any additional field work you complete this semester will be considered an early field experience, and you will still have the 90-hour requirement to complete in the future.

### **Policy on Academic Honesty**

Recognized standards of honesty are part of the foundation on which the integrity of an academic community rests. Accordingly, the Moravian College faculty in 1986 adopted a statement on academic honesty, the standards of which will be strictly applied in this course. You are encouraged to read carefully the description of this policy which is printed in your student handbook. If you are unsure about the propriety of a given procedure or approach for completing assigned work in this course, please consult with me before completing the assignment. Any breach of the College's honesty code will constitute grounds for the assignment of a failing grade in the course.