

**MORAVIAN COLLEGE**  
**EDUC 150 • Education in American Culture**  
**SPRING 2008**

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Office hours: Wednesday 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
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and by appointment.

**Overview**

An examination of both the historical development of teaching and schooling in the United States and the major ideas influencing teachers today. A consideration of current topics in education, including issues involving race and ethnicity (bilingual education, multicultural education). Includes an examination of personal educational philosophy in relation to experiences in the field as well as ideas encountered in the course. Students registered for this course must also register for the associated lab or field practicum.

**Course Objectives**

Students will be able to:

1. Explain how schools, curriculum, and teaching have evolved historically in the United States.
2. Discuss philosophical visions that underpin education.
3. Analyze the sociological and cultural factors that affect the purposes for school.
4. Reflect on current educational issues and envision future directions.
5. Analyze how education can meet the challenges of many forms of diversity.
6. Begin to construct a personal philosophy of education.

**Required Texts**

Tozer, S. E., Senese, G., & Violas, P. C. (2006). *School and society: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (5th ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Noll, M. W. (Ed.) (2008). *Taking sides: Clashing views on educational issues* (14th ed.). Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill.

**Resources**

The website associated with the Tozer text can be accessed at [www.mhhe.com/tozer5e](http://www.mhhe.com/tozer5e). You will find valuable study information to ensure that you have mastered each chapter's content.

**Assignments**

"Information is an undigested burden unless it is understood. It is knowledge only as its material is comprehended. And understanding, comprehension means that the various parts of the information are grasped in their relations to one another—a result that is attained only when acquisition is accompanied by constant reflection upon the meaning of what is studied" (Dewey, *How We Think*, 177).

The educational system in the United States has evolved since colonial times and continues to change along with society. Historical events and philosophical viewpoints have shaped our thoughts about education and will continue to do so. Every teacher is part of the process. The comment, "This is how we have always done it," is irrelevant in a discussion of educational issues. As a teacher, you will contribute to the process, as will our increased knowledge about students and how they learn, and a deeper understanding of the subjects we teach. Similarly, as society moves and changes, education will need to accommodate these changes. These three foci - STUDENT, SUBJECT, AND SOCIETY - will form the framework of our analysis of the philosophical and historical events that have created the educational system that exists today and will guide the direction that it will take in the future.

### ***Reading Assignments***

Reading assignments will include chapters in the texts and related articles. Completed reading assignments are expected on the due date. As part of each reading assignment, consider questions posed by the reading and be prepared to discuss these in class.

### ***Written Assignments***

You will complete several kinds of written assignments. Written assignments may include use of outside texts, journals, and electronic sources; these will serve to extend your understanding of concepts and familiarize you with resources. Written assignments are expected during the class session on the due date. Grades on late assignments will be reduced for each day late. Assignments must be submitted in hard copy; assignments may not be submitted by email.

Assignments should be commendable in substance and appearance. All written work is to be prepared using a word processor. Quality writing is expected in your assignments. They should be well written, that is, they should have a logical sequence and structure, and they should not have errors in spelling or grammar. Papers should be double spaced with 1" margins on all sides of the page. When your paper is finished, spell (and grammar) check it, then read it before submission.

### ***Blackboard Discussion Forum***

Important information about our class will be posted on our Blackboard site at <http://blackboard.moravian.edu>. The Discussion Forum will enable us to exchange ideas, insights, and resources about various topics throughout the semester. Information about logging in and using the site will be given in class.

### ***Tozer Reading Response***

After reading each chapter, select a question to answer and write a response to it. This could be one of the chapter-ending questions, or the question posed under the "thinking critically" items. The Response is due at the end of the class when the reading was due. It should be about 1 page long.

### ***Taking Sides Debate***

With your group, you will be presenting one debate during the semester. You will select a Controversial Issue in Noll, and select a viewpoint (YES or NO). You will study the article presenting your viewpoint and prepare to defend your viewpoint in class.

The rest of us will prepare to defend the opposing viewpoint by reading the relevant article and posting a question on Blackboard for class discussion. The questions posted should raise points that concern you about the issue. The questions that you ask will determine what is discussed in class. You may annotate your question with commentary that analyzes the question that you are asking or argues with the author(s) of the article. You may augment your commentary with reference to another article that you think adds important ideas to the issue, or shows how another issue discussed in class impacts or is impacted by this issue. Finally, you may comment on another student's posted question.

Send your question to Blackboard by 7:00 p.m. on the day preceding the discussion. This will allow class members to reflect on the questions before class.

When you are the presenter, you will be graded on your debate presentation, namely how clearly and orderly you and your group articulate your position, and how factually and appropriately you respond to comments from the audience. All group members must participate in the debate. When you are the audience, you will be graded on your posted question and on your comments during the debate. The question will be evaluated on the relevance and importance of the question to the issue. The question must relate to the article and must be submitted on time to receive full credit. Your debate comments will be evaluated on their relevance and on how they move the debate forward.

### ***Early Field Experience and Journal***

The Early Field Experience gives you the opportunity to participate in a classroom in several ways. You will observe an actual class, talk with the cooperating teacher about teaching methods, and teach by working with several students.

You will be visiting a local school for four hours each week, for a total of 40 hours. You must attend one of two meetings being held by Ms. Modjadidi, and you must have obtained the required clearances. Your dress and your conduct must meet Moravian College standards. Read the *Handbook for the Early Field Experience* to ensure that you understand the expectations and note the competencies that will comprise your grade from the cooperating teacher.

You will complete a journal entry after each school visit to document the key learnings from your visit. As the lesson progresses, identify the objective of the lesson, the curriculum that it is part of, and the methods the teacher is using. Describe one or two experiences from your visit, and then reflect on each experience.

You might discuss a teaching method, classroom management strategy, or group activity. Students are quite diverse, and your early field experience gives you the opportunity to see how a teacher provides instruction for diverse learners. Students will vary by ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and gender. Students may be learning English as a second language, or may have special needs. As you select experiences, select a range of these characteristics to write about.

Any occurrence that helps develop your picture of school is valid for writing. Each journal should be 2 pages long. Submit your journal each week at the beginning of Tuesday's class.

### ***Top Ten List***

Create a list of the top ten skills, attitudes, or behaviors of a teacher (Good & Brophy, 2008). Annotate each item with a brief statement as to why you have listed it. After each field experience, consider your list and add/subtract/change your items as you deem appropriate. Submit the list with your field experience journal each week.

## ***Papers***

You will write three papers to synthesize your understanding of the impact of philosophical positions, of historical events, and of diversity on education. Each paper should be 5 pages long and include a bibliography of 3-5 articles/books beyond our texts.

There will be a sign-up sheet of topics for each paper.

For each paper, submit:

***Topic statement.*** Submit your topic in writing with a brief (one paragraph) statement about why studying this topic is of importance. Your topic statement will be returned at the next class session with comments about any needed revisions.

***Outline.*** Prepare a brief outline of the major topics that your paper will discuss. When you submit your outline, attach your topic statement.

***Annotated list of references.*** Prepare a list of references. Then write one or two sentences summarizing the content of the item. Your list of references must not contain more than two references from one author. No more than three articles should come from one source (journal, website, etc.). When you submit your list of references, attach your topic statement and outline.

Consider your references carefully and select those that are of high quality. This means that you have reason to believe that each source is credible.

*Note:* Your list of references may be modified as you progress from your topic statement to your final paper.

***Presentation/discussion.*** We will have a panel discussion where you will each present your topic to the class and lead the class discussion during which class members integrate your findings with concepts previously discussed.

### ***Philosophical Foundations Paper***

Select three philosophies that you consider to have had an important influence on education. For each, describe the philosophy and discuss how it influenced education at the time and how/if it influences education today.

State and defend your opinion of each philosophy.

Select one of your philosophies. Take on the persona of a philosopher associated with this philosophy. Select one of your field experiences, copy it into your paper, and write how your philosopher would comment on your experience.

### ***Historical Foundations Paper***

Select three historical events that you consider to have had an important influence on education. For each, describe the event and discuss how it influenced education.

State and defend your opinion of the event.

Select one of your historical events. Take on the persona of a teacher who was teaching at the time your event took place. Select one of your field experiences, copy it into your paper, and write how your teacher would react to your experience, based on the historical event.

### ***Diversity Paper***

Select two topics related to diversity.

For each, describe the topic and discuss how it is being addressed in schools.

State and defend your position on how schools should be addressing this topic.

Select one of your field experiences and write how one of your philosophies provides praise or ideas for improving the education taking place for diverse learners.

Discuss how one of your historical events is/is not influencing the education taking place for diverse learners.

### ***Examinations***

There will be a take-home final exam.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

Attendance in every class is expected, as it is essential for your comprehension of the concepts covered. Arrive on time and remain for the entire class session.

A missed class cannot truly be made up because of the critical role that discussion plays in each class session. Even so, you are responsible for the missed work. If you are absent, please notify me of the reason. If you do not notify me, your absence will be recorded as unexcused. Absence because of illness will be excused if you bring a note from the health center or from a health professional. If you are excused for a school related activity, prepare a written report to demonstrate your understanding of the contents of the missed class so that your absence can be recorded as excused. Each unexcused absence will lower your final grade. Lateness or partial class attendance will count toward absences. You may be asked to complete a written assignment to ensure that you comprehend the objectives of missed class time.

Be prepared for each class session by completing the assignments and considering ideas and questions that emerge from the assignments. During class, remain actively involved by paying attention and sharing your relevant and thoughtful responses and questions. Class participation on a regular basis is expected to ensure grasp of textual materials and important concepts. Participation will be assessed on evidence of your completion of the assigned work, the relevance and quality of responses, the questions and comments made during class sessions, and your voluntary contributions that enrich class discussions. Be present in class, and stay with the class. Inattention or focus on work unrelated to class activities is not acceptable. Side conversations distract classmates and display disrespect to the speaker. Be sure your cell phone and laptop computer are turned off during class. Lack of appropriate participation or inappropriate participation will lower your grade for each class session in which it occurs.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

### **Grading**

You can expect to work 6-9 hours per week outside of class preparing for this class.

Each assignment will be graded based on the specific criteria stated in the syllabus and distributed during the discussion of the assignment. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment and for the course.

Assignment of grades will follow these Moravian College Catalog definitions, quoted here:

A, A-: These grades indicate achievement of the highest caliber. They involve expectations of independent work, original thinking, and the ability to acquire and use knowledge effectively.

B+, B, B-: These grades indicate higher than average achievement. Evidence of independent work and original thinking is expected.

C+, C, C-: These grades are given when the student has devoted a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention to the work of the course and has satisfied the following criteria: familiarity with the content of the course, familiarity with the methods of study of the course, and active participation in the work of the class.

D+, D, D-: These grades indicate unsatisfactory work, below the standard expected by the College.

F: This indicates failure.

The Moravian College policy on academic honesty as stated in the Catalog will be followed. Collaboration with peers can be valuable in enabling your understanding of various aspects of your work. However, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the collaborative process. You may use paper and on-line resources as you develop your work. Here, too, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the resources. If you transcribe directly the words from another's work, identify the passage as a quotation and cite the author. If you paraphrase another's ideas, credit the source that you used. Academic dishonesty will result in notification of the Academic Dean, in accordance with College policy.

Taking Sides	15 %
Field Experience Journal	15 %
Tozer readings	10 %
Philosophy Paper	15 %
History Paper	15 %
Diversity Paper	15 %
Final exam	15 %

## Course Schedule

- 1/15 Introduction: Course Overview  
 due: 1/17: Tozer - Ch. 1  
 1/17: Top Ten List  
 1/17: Preliminary Debate reading
- 1/22 Liberty and Literacy  
 due: 1/22: Tozer - Ch. 2  
 1/24: Debate #1 reading
- 1/29 The Common School Era  
 due: 1/29: Tozer - Ch. 3  
 1/31: Debate #2 reading
- 2/5 The Progressive Era  
 due: 2/5: Tozer - Ch. 4  
 2/7: Debate #3 reading
- 2/12 Diversity and Equity for Women  
 due: 2/12: Tozer - Ch. 5  
 2/14: Debate #4 reading
- 2/19 Diversity and Equity for African Americans and Indians  
 due: 2/19: Tozer - Ch. 6, 7  
 2/21: Debate #5 reading
- 2/26 National School Reform  
 due: 2/26: Tozer - Ch. 8  
 2/28: Debate #6 reading
- 3/04 Spring break
- 3/11 The Professionalization Movement  
 due: 3/11: Tozer - Ch. 9, 10  
 3/13: History paper
- 3/18 Differentiated Schooling  
 due: 3/18: Tozer - Ch. 11  
 3/20: History presentations
- 3/25 History and Philosophy  
 due: 3/25: Tozer - Ch. 12  
 3/27: Philosophy paper
- 4/1 Diversity and Equity Today  
 due: 4/1: Tozer - Ch. 13  
 4/1 & 3: Philosophy presentations
- 4/8 Post Cold War Era  
 due: 4/8: Tozer - Ch. 14  
 4/8 & 10: Diversity paper
- 4/15 Cultural Contexts  
 due: 4/15: Tozer - Ch. 15  
 4/15 & 17: Diversity presentations
- 4/22 Interrelating History, Philosophy, and Diversity  
 Personal Philosophy of Education

Note: This schedule is tentative and will be modified as necessary.