

# Moravian College

## Education 150: Education in American Culture

### Spring 2009

Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:50-2:00 p.m.  
Classroom: Main Campus, Priscilla P. Hurd Academic Complex, Room 330

Instructor: Christie L. Gilson, Ph.D.  
Phone: 610/625/7015 (voice)  
Email: [cgilson@moravian.edu](mailto:cgilson@moravian.edu)

Office: Priscilla P. Hurd Academic Complex, Room 318  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-4:30 p.m.  
Wednesdays 9:00-11:00 a.m.  
via Skype (Christie8188) or Windows Live Messenger  
(Christie.Gilson@hotmail.com) whenever I'm online  
The above office hours will also be posted on my office door in PPHAC 318.

### *Course Overview*

Welcome to Education 150, Section B. The purpose of this course is for us to experientially and intellectually explore the profession of teaching. Through in-class activities, assigned readings, papers, your field experience journals, and examinations you will grapple with your own understanding of what it means to be a teacher. We will learn and teach one another about the historical and contemporary issues influencing education today and the philosophical underpinnings which shape how teachers teach.

As this course unfolds, we will be exploring these and other questions.

- Why do I want to become a teacher?
- What kind of teacher do I want to be?
- What is the purpose of schools?
- How are teachers today shaped by what schools were in the past and what schools will be in the future?
- What broad sociopolitical pressures affect the way teachers teach?
- What are my personal visions of learning, teaching, and schooling?
- How will I sustain my vision of the ways schools are in light of current practices?

I hope that you formulate other questions you would like to examine in this course and communicate those to me.

Students who have disabilities are encouraged to register with Joe Kempfer in the Learning Services Office at 610-861-1510 or via email at [jkempfer@moravian.edu](mailto:jkempfer@moravian.edu). Please also notify the instructor of your needs at 610-625-7015 or [cgilson@moravian.edu](mailto:cgilson@moravian.edu).

## ***Required Textbooks***

- Noll, J. M. (Ed.). (2009). *Clashing views on educational issues (15 ed)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Taylor, L. S., & Whittaker, C. R. (2008). *Bridging multiple worlds: Case studies of diverse educational communities (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Tozer, S. E., Senese, G., & Violas, P. C. (2009). *School and society: Historical and contemporary perspectives (6<sup>th</sup> ed)*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Students registered for Education 150 must be simultaneously registered for the associated lab or field practicum. You must attend one of the two following meetings held by Ms. Modjadidi

- January 21st, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in PPHAC 102
- January 22, 2009 at 11:45 a.m. in Prosser Auditorium in the Hauptert Union Building

You are expected to spend four hours per week for a total of ten weeks in your field experiences between February 16th and April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009. During your field experiences, you will observe your cooperating teacher as she/he teaches, discuss teaching methods with your cooperating teacher, and have the opportunity to teach students yourself. Your conduct and dress must meet Moravian College standards. Assignments related to the early field experience are explained below.

## ***Course Goals/Learning Outcomes***

- To provide students with a formalized way of reflecting on their early field experiences
- To explore the historical eras which have influenced the American education system since its inception to the present
- To unpack and critically examine the philosophical frameworks and theories which shape the American education system
- To delve into one's own orientation to diversity in the classroom

## ***Attendance and Class Participation Policy***

Group discussion and other collaborative, in-class activities constitute a significant part of this course. Because such activities are done only in class, student attendance is required. Poor attendance will negatively affect students' grades. A limited number of excused absences will be granted to students who notify the instructor before class that they will be absent and do one of the following:

- Bring the instructor a doctor's note verifying an illness for the day of the missed class
- Notify the instructor of a serious illness or death in the immediate family
- Notify the instructor of a religious holiday that conflicts with the class date and time
- Notify the instructor of a school-related activity that takes the student away from campus during the class meeting time

Attendance means that the student is present in PPHAC 330 from 12:50-2:00 p.m. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices during class will result in an absence being recorded for that day. Laptops may be used only for class work. Students are expected to remain alert during class and are asked to refrain from engaging in off-topic discussion with their peers except during break times.

## ***Assignments***

All assignments for this course should reflect the following criteria.

- (1) The assignment must represent your original work. I encourage you to reread Moravian College's academic honesty policy in the Student Handbook located at <http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/Handbook08.pdf>. The academic honesty policy will be followed in this course. Whenever you quote someone else or use an idea they came up with, you must cite their work properly to avoid plagiarism.
- (2) Compose your assignment in a word processor such as Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Follow this convention in preparing your assignments. At the top of the file write:
  - a. Class Name
  - b. Assignment Name
  - c. Your name
  - d. Date turned in
- (3) Because all assignments will be emailed to the instructor, rather than being turned in in hardcopy, the filename you use for your assignment is important. Use this convention in naming your files.
  - a. Your last name
  - b. Underline character ( \_ )
  - c. The assignment name
  - d. For example: Gilson\_Historical\_Paper.docx
- (4) Double-space your assignment and use 12-point. Rather than using italics, bold, or underlining to title the various sections of your paper, use the heading levels within Word.
- (5) Email your assignment to the instructor as an attachment before the class date and time when it is due. The instructor will email you a brief message to alert you that she has received your assignment.
- (6) Logical structure, well-organized prose, proper grammar usage, and correct spelling are expected in all assignments. Note that in accord with English writing conventions, a paragraph must consist of at least three sentences. Any student who is concerned about the content of her/his assignment may visit the instructor during office hours to receive preliminary feedback before the assignment due date.

## **Assignment Explanations**

### **January Teaching Autobiography (individual assignment)**

The best teachers are those who reflect on their practice often and deeply. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to put down in writing your reasons for wanting to be a teacher. Your initial autobiography due in January should be two to three pages in length. You need not address all of the following points in your autobiography. But, you should address a fair number of them or examine two or three in significant depth.

- Why did I choose teaching as my major?
- Which people in my life encouraged or discouraged me to consider teaching as my profession?
- How do I define teaching?
- What makes for a very good teacher?
- Am I sure I want to be a teacher? Why or why not?
- Do I have any feelings of uncertainty about being a teacher?
- What sort of teacher do I see myself as now?
- What kind of teacher do I aspire to be in the future?

### **Early Field Experience Journal (individual assignment)**

While you are observing your cooperating teacher during your field visits, take notes on the following topics.

- (1) the lesson objective(s)
- (2) the curriculum being taught
- (3) the teaching methods the cooperating teacher employs
- (4) how the students in the classroom learn what the teacher is attempting to teach them
- (5) Document any interesting experiences you observed or participated in during the lesson.
- (6) Summarize any conversations you had with your cooperating teacher regarding the lesson or other topics related to teaching.

Choose from the above topics in writing your weekly journal. Reflect about the topics chosen by reviewing your notes, remembering the thoughts and feelings you had when in the classroom, and speculating about how you would have reacted if you were the teacher at that moment. Rather than just a recitation of facts, your journal should access deep levels of thinking. Each week's journal should be at least two pages in length. Email your journal for each week you are in the field to your instructor by that week's Tuesday before class begins.

Vary the topics discussed in your journal from week to week. For example, you might discuss a classroom management strategy in one week's journal and a particular student's reaction to the implementation of that strategy another week. Your own opinions and reactions are welcome topics. One week you may wish to explain a problem you or the cooperating teacher is encountering in teaching students. Another week you may wish to describe the various forms of diversity in your classroom and your personal reaction to those forms of diversity.

### **In-Class Debate (paired assignment)**

The purpose of this assignment is for you and an assigned partner to thoroughly familiarize yourselves with the Noll readings for a given week and to facilitate an in-class debate about those issues. For this assignment you will prepare:

- (1) A spoken and PowerPoint summary of both the affirmative and negative articles within the reading assignment for the week to be presented in class. You may elect to have one member of your dyad present one article and the other member the other. Alternatively, you may both present particular points of both articles. In order to explain the debate thoroughly as a reminder to your classmates, include in your presentation:

- (a) The names of the authors of the articles
  - (b) The titles of the articles
  - (c) A clear explanation of both sides of the debate
  - (d) Three justifications the authors use to bolster their arguments. (Therefore, there should be a total of six arguments, since there are at least two sides to each debate.)
- (2) Prepare a handout for your classmates that contains the information outlined above. In order to spark debate participation, you may also wish to include other points on your handout, however, only the information outlined in letters a-d above is required.
- (3) Send the instructor a copy of both your handout and your PowerPoint electronically at least 30 minutes before the class period during which you will present. This will allow her sufficient time to convert and braille your materials.
- (4) Determine a way to split up the class so that all of your colleagues are engaged in a debate of the issue. You may divide the class up into two groups. Or, you may assign selected class members various roles (e.g., time keeper, task master, etc.).
- (5) The class is to debate your issue for approximately 10-15 minutes. Ensure that no person dominates the discussion, preventing others from having their say. If the debate lags, it is your responsibility to bring up new points to keep the class engaged.
- (6) You will be graded on your familiarity with the issues assigned to you. Your handout and PowerPoints' clarity, thoroughness, structure and organization, and mechanics will be assessed as well. Finally, your ability to facilitate a debate within the class will be evaluated.

### **Historical Events Paper (individual assignment)**

Choose two events from the history of American education from the assigned readings in this course or your own research. Recount each event in enough detail to orient the reader, assuming she/he has no prior knowledge of the events. Explain how the events influenced education in the United States. Offer your opinions about the importance of the events in shaping how education is practiced today. Provide at least three distinct reasons supporting your opinions about each of the two events. Finally, for each historical event, speculate on how your cooperating teacher might adapt his/her teaching, were she/he to be immediately brought back to the time in which the events took place. Suggest how the historical events might influence his/her teaching. This paper should be at least five pages in length.

### **Philosophical Foundations Paper (individual assignment)**

Select two philosophies that you feel have significantly influenced American education from the Tozer textbook or your own research. Identify the historical and political contexts that shaped the philosophies when they were first espoused. Describe the philosophies' principles. Explain how the philosophies impacted education in the past and how they do today. State your personal opinions about the two philosophies. Review your field experience journal, and choose a specific experience from it. Cut and paste that experience from your journal into your philosophy paper in a separate paragraph from the body of your paper. Speculate about how one of the two philosophers you have written about would react to the field experience.

## Case Study Group Project (group project)

The purpose of the Case Study Group Project is to demonstrate your group's ability to comprehend, research, and explain a case study from the Taylor and Whittaker text to your peers. Your group will choose one of the cases from the Taylor and Whittaker text to review for this assignment. The assignment consists of two components.

- (1) As a group, write a five-page paper that contains the following content.
  - a. In your own words, restate the issues of the case as your group interprets them. Provide a description of the student, the teacher, and the dilemma presented in the case. (1 page or more)
  - b. Research the student's label of difference and explain all sides of any controversy surrounding the label. Be sure to cite at least three academic sources from your research. (Note: websites, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are not appropriate citations. Academic textbooks and peer-reviewed journals are appropriate. (one page or more)
  - c. Select two questions from the Taylor and Whittaker book to answer within your paper. Restate the questions. Answer them thoroughly, citing at least two academic resources per answer. (two pages or more)
  - d. List at least five professional resources where your colleagues can find more information about effectively teaching students who have the label you chose. Whereas academic sources must be gathered from the academic literature, professional sources are companies, organizations, or other entities your colleagues might find useful in teaching about the topic of diversity you've chosen. For each source, include its full name, its full URL (website address), a phone number, and its mailing address.
  - e. Carefully attend to paper structure and organization, flow of the paper, proper grammar usage, and correct spelling. Remember to cite your academic sources properly.
- (2) Prepare a ten-minute PowerPoint presentation of your case study paper. Within your PowerPoint presentation, include the following components:
  - a. List your group name, the names of all group participants, and the name and label ascribed to your case study student. (thirty seconds)
  - b. Brief summary of the case (one minute)
  - c. Brief summary of any controversy about the label ascribed to the student (one minute)
  - d. Pose one of your questions researched in your paper to your classmates. Facilitate a discussion of answers to the question posed. You will be assessed not only on the content of your presentation but also on your group's ability to facilitate the class discussion. Prepare probes to spark discussion if the class is reluctant to respond. (remainder of the time allotted for your group presentation)
  - e. Send the instructor an electronic copy of your PowerPoint at least 30 minutes before the class period during which you will present your Case Study Group Project. This will allow her sufficient time to convert and braille your PowerPoint.

## **April Autobiography (individual assignment)**

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to reflect back upon your ideas about teaching, as written up in your autobiography written in January and to compare those ideas to those you now have after having participated in your early field experience. Reread your January Autobiography. Skim through your entire Field Journal as well. Select at least three ideas from either your January Autobiography or your Field Journal to reexamine in your April Autobiography. Describe how your ideas have changed or remained the same. Explore what experiences and what thinking have either reinforced your previous ideas or caused you to change your mind. You may incorporate ideas discussed in class as well as points from the reading assignments into your paper. Include a discussion concerning the status of your decision to become a teacher.

This assignment should be two to three pages in length and should not be merely a revision of the January assignment. Rather, the essay should be written separately from the January paper. However, you should refer back to the January composition when writing the April one. Here are some ideas you may wish to examine in your April paper.

- How have I grown as a teacher this semester?
- What have I discovered about myself as a teacher?
- How has my thinking about teaching, learning, and schooling evolved?

## **Midterm and Final Examinations (individual assessments)**

Two examinations will be given during the course. They will test you on material from the required readings, your class notes, and points and content brought up during class discussions. The examinations will be closed-book and will consist of a combination of essay, short-answer, and multiple-choice questions.

## **Professionalism (individual assessment)**

As teachers, we are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times while in our respective work settings. In Education 150, Section B, your professionalism will be assessed using the following criteria.

### **(1) Class Participation**

A portion of the students' grade will be used to assess the quality of class participation. Students who consistently and respectfully contribute to class discussions will receive full credit for in-class participation.

### **(2) Respect for Others**

Respectful interactions with others are essential. Being kind to other students who share their opinions during class, even if you do not agree with them, is expected. When discussing grades for individual assignments with the instructor, remaining respectful is appreciated.

### **(3) Class Attendance**

Just as you will be expected to be on time and to stay until the day is over when teaching, you are expected to be in this class on time and to remain until class is over.

- (4) Students who turn in work after the due date of any assignment are expected to communicate with the instructor as soon as they know their assignment is to be late.** Students are to notify the instructor of when they will turn in their assignment. The instructor reserves the right to change the date by which late work must be turned in in order for students to receive partial credit.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b># of Points</b>
January Teaching Autobiography	5
Early Field Experience Journal	10
In-Class Debate	10
Midterm Examination	15
Historical Events Paper	10
Philosophical Foundations Paper	10
Case Study Group Project	10
April Autobiography	5
Final Examination	15
Professionalism	10

### ***Grading Scale***

The total number of points a student can earn in the class is 100. The instructor reserves the right to use qualitative judgment when making determinations of grades for assignments and the final course grade.

94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F



## ***Class Schedule***

<b>Class Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>	<b>Other Assignment</b>
<b>1/20</b>	Introductions	Syllabus	none
<b>1/22</b>	Diversity in Education	T&W Chapter 2 pp. 15-42	none
<b>1/27</b>	Educational Aims/Historical Perspectives	TS&V Chapter 1 pp. 2-17	none
<b>1/29</b>	Partnering with Diverse Families and Communities	T&W Chapter 3 pp. 46-63	January Autobiography
<b>2/3</b>	Library Visit; The Jeffersonian Era	TS&V Chapter 2 pp. 22-47	none
<b>2/5</b>	Social Experiences in Schools	N Issue 1 pp. 2-15	Debate 1
<b>2/10</b>	The Common School Era	TS&V Chapter 3 pp. 54-82	none
<b>2/12</b>	Curriculum Standardization	N Issue 2 pp. 16-30	Debate 2
<b>2/17</b>	African-American Schooling; GS: Sharon Brown	TS&V Chapter 4 pp. 88-115	Weekly Field Journal 1
<b>2/19</b>	Resegregation and Brown v. Board of Education	N Issue 7 pp. 100-114	Debate 3
<b>2/24</b>	The Progressive Era	TS&V Chapter 5 pp. 126-161	Weekly Field Journal 2; Midterm Examination
<b>2/26</b>	Behaviorism and Educational Practice	N Issue 3 pp. 31-47	Debate 4
<b>3/3</b>	no class; spring break	none	none
<b>3/5</b>	no class; spring break	none	none
<b>3/10</b>	American Indian Schooling	TS&V Chapter 6 pp. 168-190	Weekly Field Journals 3&4
<b>3/12</b>	Constructivism	N Issue 4 pp. 48-63	Debate 5
<b>3/17</b>	The Early Cold War Era	TS&V Chapter 7 pp. 200-223	Weekly Field Journal 5
<b>3/19</b>	Federal Oversight of Schools	N Issue 8 pp. 115-131	Debate 6
<b>3/24</b>	Girls and Women's Schooling	TS&V Chapter 8 pp. 228-253	Weekly Field Journal 6
<b>3/26</b>	Boys' Education	N Issue 17 pp. 286-307	Debate 7; Historical Events Paper
<b>3/31</b>	The Professionalization Movement	TS&V Chapter 10 pp. 298-331	Weekly Field Journal 7
<b>4/2</b>	High Stakes Testing	N Issue 9 132-153	Debate 8
<b>4/7</b>	Sexual Orientation	T&W Chapter 11 pp. 223-242	Weekly Field Journal 8
<b>4/9</b>	Charter Schools	N Issue 12 pp. 200-216	Debate 9; Philosophical Foundations Paper

<b>4/14</b>	Disability and Giftedness	T&W Chapter 9 pp. 169-189	Weekly Field Journal 9
<b>4/16</b>	Full Inclusion	N Issue 14 pp. 231-247	Debate 10
<b>4/21</b>	Class Presentations of Case Study Group Projects	none	Weekly Field Journal 10; Case Study Group Project
<b>4/23</b>	Dropout Curtailment	N Issue 15 pp. 248-264	Debate 11; April Autobiography due
<b>4/28</b>	Linguistic and Cultural Influences on School	T&W Chapter 7 pp. 119-143	none
<b>4/30</b>	Poverty and Socioeconomic Class as Factors in Schooling	T&W Chapter 8 pp. 146-167	none
<b>5/6</b>	Final Examination	none	Final Examination