

# Education 150 (z) Education in American Culture

Fall 200 Main PPHAC 232

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 5-6:30 p.m. Class: 6:30-9:30 p.m.

*A true teacher never thinks his or her education is complete, but is always seeking to add to his or her knowledge. The moment a persons ceases to be a systematic student he or she ceases to be an effective teacher.*

J.G. Fitch (Common Sense Didactics, Sabin, 1904)

## Goals

- 1) provide a framework for understanding the history of public education in the US
- 2) begin the process of becoming a “reflective teacher”
- 3) develop a personal philosophy or vision for teaching
- 4) begin to develop the skills necessary for the analysis of educational issues and research
- 5) gain a basic understanding of school governance, law, and leadership as it relates to the philosophy of education
- 6) observe and reflect on real learning communities through a field experience

## Required Texts

- 1) Tozer, Violas, & Senese, (1998) School and society 5<sup>th</sup> ed., McGraw Hill
- 2) Fenstermacher and Soltis, (1998) Approaches to teaching, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Columbia University

## Attendance

This course requires informed participation in the discussions so you are expected to attend every class with a basic understanding of the assigned readings, and topics to be discussed in class. If you must be absent please try to inform me before the missed class. Missing more than three classes presents serious concerns about your ability to succeed in this course.

Absence is not an excuse for missed work. If you cannot turn in work in a timely manner you should discuss this with me. Late work can be accepted depending on the situation.

## Academic Honesty

The College has a clear position on academic honesty. Written work must be the product of your own thought and effort. If the work of others is quoted or paraphrased in your papers cite those sources with a standard (APA) citation (preferred) or MLA bibliographic notation. Ideas gleaned from discussions with others do not constitute plagiarism. Direct quotations from “experts” should be cited in standard reference fashion.

If a completed assignment is found to be plagiarized or dishonest, a grade of zero will be entered for that assignment and the Academic Dean will be notified in accordance with College policy. If you have any questions as to how to handle the materials of others’ please contact me.

## Field Experience

This course requires a field experience. You will be going into the schools approximately four hours per week. This is a unique opportunity to see first hand what goes on in local schools and will allow you to make connections with your class work and the life of experienced educators. Pennsylvania now requires that you have the necessary clearances to work with students. More information on this topic will be provided during the first day of class. Successful completion of the field experience and a journal make up a portion of your grade.

## Course Schedule

### **Week 1 (Sept. 1)**     *Introductions*

Introductions: clearances, syllabus, journals, discussion: perceptions on the following questions.

- 1) What is the nature of history?
- 2) Why study the history of education?
- 3) What is philosophy?
- 4) What is thinking about “thinking” (epistemology)?
- 5) What is “vision”?
- 6) What is personal philosophy of education?

Readings/Handout: [Going to School in 1776](#)

**Assignment # 1:** School and Society, Chapter 2, Liberty and Literacy, p. 24-51.  
Answer questions 1,2,3 with short essays, p. 51.

### **Week 2 (Sept. 2)**     *The History of Public Education in America*

Informed discussion: Reading and Assignment questions  
Video: PBS “In Schools We Trust” with discussion guide

**Assignment #2:** Schools and Society, Chapter #3, School as a Public Institution: The Common School Era, p. 54-84. Questions 1,2,3 on p. 84.

**Due:** Assignment #1

**Week 3 (Sept. 9)**     *Understanding the Role of Philosophy*

Informed Discussion: Reading and Assignment questions

Instructor Presentation: Timeline: the issues of public education

Informed discussion: Ethics, morals and values in education

Group work: Handout: Annual Editions, '04-05 Unit 4: Morality and values in education.

**Assignment #3:**

**Week 4 (Sept. 16)**     *The Legal and Political Climate of Public Education*

Review: Legal Historical Flow Chart Handout (assignment #3)

Introduce: Assignment: Independent Study Project on Judicial Issues

**Assignment #4:**     Independent Study Handout:  
Annual Editions, '03-04, Article 22, Decisions that have shaped  
United States education, Zirkel

**Due:** Assignment #3

**Week 5 (Sept 23)**     *Life in the Classroom*

Discussion: The role of the courts in public education

Instructor Presentation: School violence, classroom management, teaming

Videos: Kantor's assertive discipline

**Assignment #5:**     Schools in Society Chapter #8, p.228-252 questions 1,2,3 on  
p. 253.

**Assignment #6:**     Teacher Interview Handout

**Due:** Assignment #4

**Week 6 (Sept 30)**     *Cultural Diversity in the Classroom/Charters and School Choice*

Informed Discussion: Assignment #5  
Instructor Presentation: Interviewing Educators  
Film: Just a Teacher with discussion guide

**Assignment #7:**     Approaches to Teaching, Chapters 1-4.

**Due :** Assignment # 5

**Week 7 (Oct. 6)**     *Philosophical Positions on Teaching*

Informed discussion: thinking about engaging students  
Group work: sharing ideas about learning and instruction

**Assignment #8:**     Approaches to Teaching, Chapters 5 & 6

**Due:** Assignment #6

**Week 8 (Oct. 21)**     *The Role of Reflection in the Life of an Educator: Developing a Vision*

Instructor Presentation: Creating a personal vision  
Group work: sharing ideas for engaging students

**Assignment # 9:**     Position Paper: A personal vision for teaching

**Week 9 (Oct 28)**     *The Role of Research in Public Education*

Instructor Presentation: Introduction to education research  
Introduction: The Final Project—A Pathfinder

**Week 10 (Nov. 4)**     *School Governance and Educational Leadership*

Instructor Presentation: What does the school board and administration do?  
Leadership Forum: Formal discussion with handout  
In class project: Group work: Concept mapping of school leadership

**Due:** Assignment # 8

**Week 11 ( Nov 11)** *The Quest for Excellence: Standards and NCLB*

Instructor Presentation: (NCLB Act of 2001)

Informed discussion: Quality and accountability in schools

Handouts: Annual Editions, 03/04 Unit 7, p. 148-167  
04/05 Unit 8, p. 176-195

**Week 12 (Nov 18 )** *Special Education/Gifted Education*

Instructor Presentation: Overview of Chapter 14 & 16 of the PA school code

Video: Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom

Discussion/group work: co-teaching, inclusion, accommodations and differentiated Instruction

**Due:** The Final Project

**Week 13 (Dec 2 )** *Career Stages of Teachers and the Future of the Profession*

Instructor Presentation: The Career Stages of Educators  
The Future of Public Education

**Assignments, Papers and Projects**

This is foremost a philosophy course and as such is a discussion based course. Informed participation is paramount to success in this course. Reading assignments need to be done before class the classroom discussions. “Quick quizzes may be administered before discussions about the readings and will help determine your discussion grade.

The course requires written essays, a teacher interview, a position paper, field experience journal and a research pathfinder. Details about how to complete each assignment will be provided in class (handouts).

**Grading Rubric**

Your grade will be based on the amount of points you are able to garner over the course of the semester and calculated as a percentage. The breakdown is as follows:

Discussion participation:	100 pts	Attendance: 120 pts
Essay Assignments #1-#5:	100 pts	Total possible points= 770
Teacher Interview:	100 pts	<b>Good luck!</b>
Vision Position paper:	100 pts	

Pathfinder (final project) 150 pts

Field Experience Journal  
and satisfactory rating 100 pts