

## **MORAVIAN COLLEGE**

Education 160 PM and Z –Culture, Community, and Diversity:  
An Introduction to Critical Teaching  
Spring 2011

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### **Initial Thoughts**

Contrary to the perception that is often espoused by the public, quality teaching is not a job that allows you to walk into a classroom at 8 and leave at 3. It is not opening a text at chapter 1 in September and closing it in June at the end of the book. It is not the mindless continuation of what you did last year, and the year before that, and the year before that. Rather, it is struggling with educational philosophies that do not always match your own. It is being open to changing your educational philosophies when valid arguments are presented, whether the source be Paola Freire or the colleague in the next room. It is the endless hunt for just the right anecdote or explanation that will create the aha moment for your students. It is the continual search for new ideas, new methods, new material. It is taking classes, taking classes, and taking more classes. It is knowing where you came from so that you have an idea of where you are going – or even, perhaps, where you should not go. It is never ever giving up on a student, even when your common sense questions your own judgment. It is a job that allows you to watch small children or teenagers grow into fine young men and women, and know that, somewhere along the line, you played a small part in that success story.

This job description should make you think about some of the realities of the role of an American teacher. The Introduction to Critical Teaching will continue this thought process by providing you with a basic foundation to think historically, socially, politically, philosophically, ethically, and personally about education in America and the role you want to play in its future.

### **Competencies**

The course competencies are from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Framework for Grades Pre K-4, (EC) 4-8 (MC) , and 7-12 Program Guidelines as well as program guidelines designed for meeting the needs of English language learners (ELL) and learners with disabilities (AAC).

### **Students Are Expected To:**

1. have a knowledge of Pre K-4 educational foundation in theory and policy in work with children (EC I. B1)
2. develop concepts of culture (EC II. D1)
3. recognize the central role that families play in the development of children with and without disabilities (EC IV. A1)
4. recognize the impact of children with disabilities on family systems and concerns of families with exceptional learning needs (EC IV A3)
5. know legal rights of families including laws related to family and student confidentiality (EC IV. A3)

6. recognize variations in beliefs, traditions, and values related to children and learning across and within cultures including child rearing practices, parent/child interaction styles and discipline (EC IV. A4)
7. recognize impact of differences in values, languages, poverty, socioeconomics, and customs that can exist between home and school (EC IV. A5)
8. identify the impact of culture on one's own beliefs, values, and behaviors (EC IV. A5)
9. develop and sustain partnerships with families via respectful, ongoing, meaningful communication with family members (EC IV. B1)
10. recognize when to involve families in the policy decisions of a program (EC IV. B2)
11. recognize how to provide families with meaningful opportunities to be involved throughout their child's education including effective conferencing with families (EC IV. B3)
12. acquire strategies for keeping families informed of children's progress including working with linguistic and cultural interpreters for culturally and linguistically diverse families (EC IV. B4)
13. develop skills to provide information about community resources, parenting education, and child development to families (EC IV. A1)
14. develop awareness of community resources useful to families of children with and without disabilities (EC IV. B6)
15. create positive social contexts for learning (EC V. A1)
16. identify how the development of all young adolescents occurs in the context of classrooms, families, peer groups, communities, and society (ML I. B4)
17. be aware of legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher related to special education referral and evaluation and the rights and procedural safeguards that students are guaranteed (ACC 1)
18. demonstrate understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher for special educational referral and evaluation, and of the rights and procedural safeguards that students are guaranteed (ACC I. A2)
19. demonstrate an understanding of possible causes and implications of over-representation of minorities in special education so as not to misinterpret behaviors that represent cultural, linguistic differences as indicative of learning problems (ACC I. A3)
20. demonstrate an understanding of the meaningful roles that parents and students play in the development of the student's education (ACC I. E7)
21. demonstrate sensitivity towards multicultural and economic perspectives in order to encourage parent participation (ACC I. E6)
22. demonstrate an understanding of how to support student and family communication and meaningful participation in the student's educational program (ACC I. E7)
23. work collaboratively with all members of the student's instructional team including parents and agency personnel (ACC I. E8)
24. demonstrate knowledge of language systems, structures, functions, and variations (ELL I. A1)
25. identify socio-cultural characteristics of ELL's including educational background and demographics (ELL I. B1)
26. describe how ELL's cultural communication styles and learning styles affect the learning process (ELL I. B2)
27. describe how ELL's cultural values affect their academic achievement and language development (ELL I. B3)
28. identify bias in instruction, materials, and assessments (ELL I. B4)
29. demonstrate cross-cultural and/or linguistically diverse instructional settings (ELL I. B6)
30. observe culturally and /or linguistically diverse instructional settings (ELL I. B6)
31. describe the legal responsibilities related to serving ELL's (ELL II. C1)

## Required Texts

Amatea, E. (2009). *Building culturally responsive family-school relationships*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Ballenger, C. (1999). *Teaching other people's children*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fecho, B. (2004). *Is this English?* New York: Teachers College Press.

Wink, J. (2011). *Critical pedagogy: Notes from the real world* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

I also ask that you register to receive the online version of *The New York Times*. You can do so by going to [nytimes.com/auth/login](http://nytimes.com/auth/login).

Note: We may use additional pertinent articles that I will make available to you through hard copy, or your Moravian email.

## Attendance

A classroom should be a community of learners, not simply a group of people who sit passively as they await knowledge to fall upon them. "*Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You have to set yourself on fire* (author unknown)." In order to accomplish this end, you are expected to attend every class, exhibit a basic understanding of the assigned reading, and be a lively, thoughtful participant in classroom discussions. Arrive on time and remain for the entire class period. If you must be absent for some reason, **you are to let me know in advance**; alternate work will be assigned. For each unexcused absence, a zero will be calculated for 2% of your total grade. It is your responsibility to inquire about and secure materials that were distributed or assignments that were made during a missed class. Absence is not an excuse for late work. If circumstances prevent you from completing an assignment on time, you **must** discuss the situation with me in advance of the due date.

## 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. This dialogue is not plagiarism (the presentation of someone else's thoughts as your own), even when the discussion produces points of view that have something in common with other students. The College's position, however, on academic honesty is clear. For written work to be acceptable, its final form must be the product of your own thought and effort. If the work of others is quoted or paraphrased in your papers, cite that source using APA bibliographic notation (I will create a mini APA style guide for you and a similar guide is provided on the Reeves Library site). Remember the Student Handbook also advises you to "keep all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments until a final course grade is given." In addition, I expect the following honor statement to appear at the end of each paper, test, and quiz that you submit: "I am aware of the need for honesty and integrity when doing my coursework." You are to sign your name below the statement. See the Handbook if you have additional questions.

All violations of academic honesty reported to the Dean are shared with the Teacher Education Committee at the time the candidate's application for student teaching is being considered. In the past, such violations have prevented the Committee from approving some candidates for student teaching.

## **Field Experience**

The early field experience gives you the opportunity to begin your movement from the desk of the student to the desk of a teacher (though you will, hopefully, always see yourself as a student. “*One who learns from one who is learning drinks from a running stream* - Native American proverb).” During these four hours a week you will observe classes, talk with cooperating teachers, and work with students. In order to set up your field experience, you must attend one of the two meetings being held by Ms. Modjadidi, the Education Department Field coordinator. After you meet with Ms. Modjadidi, I will give you expanded assignment information related to your field experience and my class.

The meetings with Ms. Modjadidi are in PPHAC 102 on January 19 (5:00) and January 20 (11:45).

## **Cell Phones and Laptops**

Since each of you has been raised with strong lessons in courtesy and respect, any expansion of a discussion about cell phone use, text messaging, or inappropriate laptop use during class should not be necessary.

## **Written Assignments**

Written assignments are to be turned in during the class session on the due date. Grades on late assignments will be reduced for each day late. All papers must be submitted in hard copy and typed with 1” margins on all sides, Times New Roman 12. Be sure to use spell check and proofread a hard copy before turning in the paper. APA format information can be accessed from AMOS/course tools; a handout will also be provided. Additional information will be discussed in class.

## **Course Goals/ Learning Outcomes**

1. to provide students with a formalized way of reflecting on their early field experiences
2. to discuss how aspects of culture including language, demographics, communication styles, and values impact the way students learn
3. to discuss the diverse nature of classrooms and to consider the impact of such diversity on the teacher’s work
4. to explore relationships between community, family, and school, including discussions of the impact of culture on that relationship
5. to describe the role parents play in the education of their children
6. to describe best practices for involving parents in their children’s work in school
7. to describe how resources in the community can be used to enhance the education of young people
8. to describe legal responsibilities related to English language learners
9. to describe legal rights and responsibilities related to students with disabilities
10. to critically examine the philosophical frameworks and theories that shape the American education system
11. to describe critical pedagogy with an emphasis on how notions of language and community fit into the broader philosophy
12. to describe critical pedagogy as it relates to issues of diversity including issue of multiculturalism
13. to develop a personal philosophy that includes answers to the questions, “What learning is of most importance? What are schools for?”
14. to explore the historical eras that have influenced the American education system from its inception to the present

## Essential Questions

1. What is culture?
2. How does language help to shape one's culture?
3. How does culture shape the nature of family?
4. What does a teacher need to know about culture and language in order to understand students within a classroom?
5. How should that knowledge of language and culture impact the way a teacher teaches?
6. What does a teacher need to know of the larger community from which his or her students come?
7. What does the teacher need to know about the local community to be an effective teacher?
8. How should a teacher reach out to the families of students/
9. What philosophical systems guide my teaching?

## Assignments/Grades

Teaching Autobiography	10
Double Entry Journals	10
Field Experience Journals	10
Ballenger/Fecho Paper	10
Wink Paper	10
Video Response	5
Presentation	10
Community/School Board Response	10
Final	15
Professionalism	10
(class participation, attendance, field experience)	

## Course Schedule

### Introducing Ourselves/Language and Culture

- 1/19 Introductions, course overview, double entry assignment, teaching autobiography
- 1/26 Ballenger: Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Due: Journal, dbl entry (8)
- 2/2 Ballenger: Ch. 6, 7, 8; Amatea 1  
Due: dbl entry (8), Academic autobiography  
Computer Lab – review of APA and accessing info via ERIC

### Studying Our Classrooms, Race, Language, and Culture in a High School Setting

- 2/9 Fecho: Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4  
Due: Journal; dbl entry (5)
- 2/16 Fecho: Ch. 5, 6; Amatea: Ch. 5, 7

Due: Dbl entry (8), Ballenger paper  
*Field Experience Starts This Week*

- 2/23 Fecho: Ch. 7, 8, 9  
Due: Dbl entry (5), Field experience journal #1
- 3/2 Video and Discussion  
Due: Journal and Fecho paper (Fecho paper by 3/5)
- 3/9 Spring Break
- 3/16 Intro to Student Presentation  
Amatea: Ch. 8, 9; Journal  
Due: Video response paper, field experience # 3, dbl entry (5)
- 3/23 Amatea: Ch. 12, 13  
Due: dbl entry (8), Journal,
- 3/30 Amatea: Ch. 11  
Due: Journal, dbl entry (5)

#### **Developing A Philosophy of Education**

- 4/6 Wink: Introduction and Ch 1, 2,  
Due: Journal, dbl entry (8)
- 4/13 Wink: Ch.3, 4, 5  
Due:Journal, dbl entry (8)
- 4/20 Speakers: ELL; Disabilities  
***Outlines for presentations are due Monday, April 18 by midnight***  
Final Reviews and Discussion
- 4/27 Student presentations

Final Exam due:

Note: reminder of signing up for free New York Times online (see above).

Other helpful information: <http://lessonplans.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/09>. You can read past education articles by logging onto the above site. At the end of each article, you will find a series of blog responses. Remember that theory informs practice, and practice informs theory. Be proactive about being an informed educator; don't wait for someone to deliver the information to you.

*The syllabus is subject to change if circumstances necessitate adjustments. Appropriate notice will be given.*

**Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street**

**(extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.**

**Comenius Center students who believe they may need accommodations in this class re encouraged to contact the Dean of the Comenius Center as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.**