

NEIU Educational Leadership and Development-Educational Foundations

Northeastern Illinois University
College of Education
Department of Educational Leadership and Development
Educational Foundations Program

Syllabus for
Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Public Education in America (EDFN 305)
or
The Development of Educational Thought (EDFN 405)

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COLLEGE-WIDE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Reflective Professionals Building Learning Communities -this framework, developed by the faculty of the College of Education at Northeastern Illinois University, represents the overall objective of the College. It is built into every course offered by the College, including this one, which helps students to understand what it means to be "reflective," what constitutes a "learning community," and how to be a professional. Please visit the College of Education's web site at <http://www.neiu.edu/~edudept>

REQUIRED READING

Recommended required reading:

- Schultz, B.D. (2008). *Spectacular things happen along the way: Lessons from an urban classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press. <<Contact Brian Schultz at bschultz@neiu.edu if you would like to arrange a time for him to speak with your students).
- Spring, J. (2006). *American education* (12th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Choose at least one additional book that the entire class will read. The list of books is found on the , <<examples that have been used in the past include: Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillian.; Spring, J. (2006). *American education*. New York: McGraw Hill.)>>
- The sample course outline details additional required reading for the course in the form of articles and book chapters. <<These articles can be found via the course outline and are either on the Internet or in the electronic reserves at the library—by searching for EDFN 305/405 via Schultz or Meiners you will be able to find them on the eReserves at the library. In addition, the articles found on this example course outline are all found on the flash drive provided with this information.>>
- A choice book list will be presented in the class. You will choose one book from the list.

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to help students develop a more thorough understanding of the development of education and schooling in the United States. We will examine critical issues and discuss them in light of the social, economic, and political conditions of the times. We will also discuss educational ideas and teaching practices from broad philosophical perspectives. This is a survey course and a theory course. We will not be directly covering instructional strategies or classroom methods. The student is encouraged to examine his/her beliefs and to develop them into a personal philosophy of education. This course includes a variety of instructional strategies: reading, research, lecture, guided discussion, small group discussion, student presentations, and directed writing assignments.

COURSE GOALS

- Critically read writings about education by: summarizing an author's point of view, evaluating the evidence used to support the point of view, drawing conclusions from the theories/ideologies of education and the evidence presented, and identifying the implications of various philosophical and historical ideas on educational development and teaching practices.
- Analyze and present educational ideas in a historical context, e.g. considering moral, social, and political influences on the shaping of classrooms, teaching, and elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which cultural differences in values, expectations, attitudes toward education, and differing beliefs about the importance of social conformity versus individual creativity influence schooling cultures and processes.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how contemporary issues represent recurring themes in the history and philosophy of education, by articulating various perspectives on these issues, especially such current issues as curriculum differentiation (tracking), the role of schools as agents of deculturalization, arguments for and against bilingual education, educational funding issues, and the changing nature of educational evaluation.
- Use the tools of historical research including primary documents and secondary sources, written and oral records, and technology.
- Compare and contrast "traditional" and "progressive" educational orientations by analyzing the ideas of at least two proponents of educational ideas and the implications of their beliefs on schooling and classroom practice in elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the social contexts of students' experiences affect the educational processes in elementary, middle, and high schools, and can either limit or extend the influence of teachers and curricula, depending upon how these out-of-school experiences are integrated (or not) into the learning process and connect to real life issues.
- Articulate and defend personal beliefs on the purposes of education, what should be taught in school, the nature of the learner and the teacher/student relationships, focusing on elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Develop/enhance computer literacy skills.
- Develop/enhance oral and written communication abilities.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments

1. Class Sessions (This is a web-enhanced course)

Attendance: Attendance and promptness are mandatory. If you are absent due to an emergency it is your responsibility to call a peer and find out what happened in class. If you must miss a session, please let me know in advance.

Preparedness: You will be expected to come to class with readings finished, prepared for discussions and with quality assignments posted or submitted via online. This is a reading and participation intensive course. Participation in class and on-line is part of your participation grade.

2. Blackboard Discussion (15 points)

You will be assigned several books to read over the course of the semester in addition readings (posted on Blackboard or handed out in class). You will keep a **key concepts ‘e-journal’** on Bb that identified key concepts from readings to bridge the reading to our classroom discussion and your understanding. You will also post responses to other students’ posting and engage in online discussion. These responses should not be summaries of the reading or other’s comments, but should be written about something that provokes, needs clarification, makes sense, or is reflective. Discussions and responses are informal and should be no more than one, double-spaced page.

3. Turning Point Educational Autobiography (5 points)

You will write a brief ‘turning point’ autobiographical narrative about your educational experiences. The narrative will respond to the following questions: 1) Where did you go to school—describing the location, demographics, years, track, employment, fashion, extracurricular and clubs, cliques, resources, etc. 2) An educational turning point in your school career. Choose a moment in your educational experiences that you feel is a significant turning point in your school (i.e. changing schools, harassment, inspirational teacher, life-event, failing a class, deciding to go to college, awards, and relationships). After describing this event, explain why you selected it, why it was significant turning point, what were/describe the choices you may have had at that moment and why you made the decisions you did. Post to the Bb Discussion Board by the third class session. No more than two and a half, double-spaced pages.

4. Progressivism School Design Power Point (5 points)

You will be assigned to a small group in-class to conceptualize a school based on assigned readings and course discussion. Your group will have some class time to discuss and design your school. You will need to meet outside of class to finish the assignment. The group power point will show your understanding of the course content and will be presented during the following class. Assessment will be based on how you answered the questions presented in class as well as your overall presentation in class.

5. Book Review/Educational Advocacy Organization WebPages (25 points)

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You will create a series of webpages based on your review/interpretation of a choice book and educational advocacy organization. Choice books to choose from will be presented in class. How your group chooses to conceptualize, represent, make sense of, reflect, and connect issues from the book and organization is up to the group. A major component of the webpages will be how you do incorporate the educational advocacy organization/institution via visits/interviews/ research into your book review conceptualization. The webpages should introduce both the book and the organization to your classmates. This assignment must also offer a reflection on your own technological learning process. Your group will have some class time to discuss and design your school. You will need to meet outside of class to finish the assignment. Webpages will be presented to the rest of the class. Webpages Rubric

6. **Participation and Quizzes (20%)**

Participation is an expectation in this course. Student perspective is emphasized in this course. You will be expected to participate appropriately and professionally in whole-class, small-group discussions, class activities and online in addition to your attendance and promptness will be taken into consideration. Short quizzes based on the course readings may be dispersed throughout the course. The quizzes will be open book and open note, and may be done in small groups. The quizzes may be multiple choice or short answer. The first quiz will be the second class.

7. **Papers (15% each)**

You will write 2 short papers this semester. Each of these papers should have references to our course readings to support argument, in addition to at least 5 external academic references (journal article, book chapters, etc.; conventions and citations in APA format) to support your research and analysis. Each paper should have 10-12 point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins around. The essay should be four, double-spaced pages. Start with a database search at our library.

One of the papers must be your **“challenge to act” personal philosophy of education.** In it you will address how you see theory connected to your teaching practices. In this short paper, discuss *how* and *why* educators’ practices are informed by theory. Offer a concrete example from our readings or from your experiences. “Challenge to Act” Rubric

The other paper may be one of the following:

A **letter to the editor** convincing the general public to support your 'side'. Imagine you are on your LSC or are on the educational taskforce of your synagogue, church or neighborhood association and you have been asked to research an issue and to write a persuasive letter to the editor. After you research your topic, you write this letter to the editor to convince the general Chicago population to support an issue. Using evidence culled from your research, write a letter to the *Tribune* 'for' or 'against' components or aspect of this issue/movement. Possible topics include, but are not limited to: Should the military be permitted to run public high schools in the city? Should for-profit corporations be permitted to run charter schools? Should merit pay be implemented for Chicago teachers? Should parental notification be required (in middle or high schools) if teachers use curricular

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materials that represent gay or lesbian parents? Should teachers be allowed to teach curriculum based on students interest and desires rather than prescribed by the city or state? One thing that is important to the paper is to cite a specific law that is reflected in your argument and persuasive writing. Letter to the Editor Rubric. -OR-

Take on a **contemporary 'hot button' educational issue** and analyze the history, philosophy and politics behind this issue and convince the audience of your point of view. Your paper should define the issue you are interested in taking on and address some of these questions: What is the history of this issue/debate? What events framed the development of this issue? In what contexts did this issue/movement develop? How/why did this issue/movement emerge? What are the core political and philosophic issues in the debate/movement? How will/does this issue impact students? Teachers? Parents? Citizens? Does scholarly research suggest that this initiative/policy/practice will benefit students/learning/communities? Possible topics include, but are not limited to: vouchers, abstinence-based education, evolution, culturally relevant pedagogy, local control of schools, etc. One thing that is important to the paper is to cite a specific law that is reflected in your argument and persuasive writing. Hot Button Rubric

Grading 100-92 A 91-83 B 82-74 C 73-65 D Below 65 F

Incompletes must be requested, with supporting materials, two weeks before the last day of our scheduled class. University policy on incompletes states that all incompletes must be requested in writing by the student. The request must detail work not completed. If you require an incomplete, you must discuss this with me as soon as possible. It is the instructor's option not to issue an incomplete. You have one semester to complete the work, or a final grade of "F" will be filed for you by the instructor. Incompletes must be requested, with supporting materials, two weeks before the last day of our scheduled class.

HAVING TROUBLE?

If you know you have poor study habits or writing skills, troubles or issues outside the course affecting your ability to do your best, let me know. You may not be responsible for the situation you are in, but you are responsible for making an effort to make me aware you need support. I will not share information you give me without your consent.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Teaching and learning are only possible with honesty. Academic integrity is an absolute expectation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following: Direct copying of any source in whole or in part without proper acknowledgment; Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax; Submitting as one's own work that which has been prepared by someone else; Paraphrasing another's words or ideas without proper acknowledgment. If there is reason to believe any work has violated the University's academic integrity policy, the work will graded a zero, regardless of whether the student intended to plagiarize. In addition, academic dishonesty may be reported to the University. Please ensure your work is your own and ideas of others are treated with respect and care through rigorous citations.

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This syllabus may be revised.

RUBRICS

Rubrics for Webpages, Hot Button Issue/Letter to the Editor Paper, and Philosophy of Education Paper are all hotlinked online and embedded within the syllabus. In addition, these rubrics are found on the flash drive provided with your materials.

General Rubric for Progressivism Power Point/Blackboard Entries/Autobiography

| Components | Less than full points | Full Points |
|---|---|--|
| Critical thinking: Contributions to discussion or presentation or reflection on educational autobiography | Errors in spelling and grammar Incomplete or unrelated work | Proper spelling and grammar Complete work Shows analytical, reflective thinking |
| Expression and Collaboration | Jumps to conclusions Lacks sensitivity to diversity concerns Engages in causing conflicts instead of resolving them Fails to dialogue about relevant course readings Fails to engage in cooperating with others Fails to reach any consensus | Practices effective responses and participation Critical thinking about questions posed Engages in meaningful discussion Reflects back what others present in appropriate way Shows sensitivity to diversity concerns Engages in cooperation, collaboration, and support of colleagues Reaches Consensus appropriately Fails to dialogue about relevant course readings |