

EFND 2030
Foundations of American Education

Faculty Instructor

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores key developments and issues in American education and schooling. We will focus primarily on the social, economic, and political role of American education and schooling in the democratization of American people and society. As a result, we will critically examine issues of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation in American educational practice. In fact, such issues will be the foundation of our examination of education.

As much as possible, I will adhere to a chronological framework as a reference point for my class lectures. However, because of developing news, current events, and the constant generation of knowledge, I will raise contemporary issues in education when appropriate. EFND 2030 is NOT an education methods course. For the most part, we will not focus on teaching individuals how to teach; how to manage a classroom; or assess learning. We will, however, discuss issues that have implications for methods.

This course is also a special summer section of EFND 2030 that is grounded in the idea of contextual teaching and learning (CTL). CTL encourages us to 1) examine the relevance of school-based learning to students' everyday lives, 2) develop an understanding of everyday life experiences in the learning process, 3) explore the role of the teacher in providing experiential and real world experiences in classroom teaching, and 4) examine the role of teachers in helping facilitate democracy in the education and lives of students.

To reach these objectives, we will focus primarily on how social, economic, and political issues affect both American society and education. As a result, race, class, gender, democracy, and capitalism are but a few issues that will be topics of discussion throughout the semester.

While the objectives of CTL are central to our examination of American education and schooling, the philosophical, historical, and sociological dimension of the social foundations of education shall also guide us. Together, CTL and the social foundations of education encourage us to also answer the following questions:

- Does education and schooling facilitate the ideal of democracy in American society?
- Do schools and communities interact with one another in the education and schooling process? If so, how?
- How does American education and schooling link students with the American and global workforce?

- How can teachers help schools better facilitate the ideals of democracy, equality, and equity in American society, communities, and the workplace?
- How does economics and politics affect what is emphasized in schools as “vital” knowledge?

Text:

Sadovnik, A. R., Cookson, Jr., P. W. & Semel, S. F. (2001). *Exploring Education: An Introduction to the Foundations of Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Second Edition.

Attendance :

You are allowed only one unexcused absence from class. After that, seven points for each missed day will be subtracted from your final numerical grade. I will be very meticulous in taking roll and will not make any exceptions for unexcused absences.

It is also important to be on time for class! If you come to class more than 15 minutes late, you will not receive credit for that class meeting. It is also your responsibility to make sure that you are counted present for each class. Please do not call me after class to tell me that you did not sign the roll. You need to be sure that you check with Kevin after class concerning tardies to class.

Excused absences include illness and the death of an immediate family member. Excused absences pertaining to illness must be accompanied with documentation from a doctor.

Notetaking :

Taking good notes is an important and critical part of the learning process, especially in college. In fact, a person who takes good notes will likely do better on exams. Please do not look at notetaking as a task. Instead, consider it an initial means of learning how to organize your thoughts in your own words. Often when taking notes, students try to get every word down exactly as the professor stated it. While it is important to get the correct information, it defeats the purpose of learning how to take notes and think critically if I have to stop my lecture to repeat sentences to you verbatim. By all means, ask me to slow down, restate, and clarify a point if necessary, but always be attentive enough to get the major points to write down in shorthand or in your own words. While I make out notes for each lecture, I do not give them out to students who miss class. Part of the learning process is to make arrangements to get notes if you miss a class, so please be responsible, come to class on time, and take good notes.

Course Requirements:

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| 1) Mid-Term Exam | 25% |
| 2) Final Exam | 25% |
| 3) Weekly Current Events (Groups) | 25% |

4) CTL Group Projects

25%

Grading Scale:

A-Excellent (90-100)

B-Good (80-89)

C-Satisfactory (70-79)

D-Passing (60-69)

F-Failure (Below 60)

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

THIS IS AN OPEN CLASSROOM. EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO HER OR HIS OPINION. Come to class prepared to engage in critical dialogue on educational issues as they relate to race, class, gender, sexuality, democracy, power, and other issues.

I make a special effort to make everybody comfortable in my classes, regardless of their political views. In fact, I want every person in this class to make at least one comment during the class. My hope is that this class will challenge you intellectually, help you to learn from your classmates, and help you make new friends in the process. I do not know how to teach any other way. **If you do not like this type of class environment, you may want to consider dropping this class and taking it with a different professor. If you do like this type of class, this is the place for you😊.**

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

The conceptual lens that I will use to examine education will come primarily from historical methods and perspectives that have influenced my life and scholarly work. I make no claims of being a totally “objective” researcher, but rather assert that my teaching and research are influenced heavily by my own experience as an African American male from the American south, born in the 1960s that is currently teaching at a predominately white institution in the south. As a result, my perspective on most issues will reflect these experiences. At the same time, African American historians such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, and others who focused their study on the history of African American education, equally influence me. Despite these inherent subjectivities, we will cover the major highlights in American education, and I encourage each of you to express your views.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

May 16

Introduction: Syllabus, Goals, and Assignments

Discussion: Teaching as a Profession

May 17

Lecture/Discussion: Overview of American Education and the Politics of Education

Assignment: Pages 1-33

May 18

Politics of Education (continued): Perspectives by Chester Finn and Jean Anyon

Assignments: Pages 34-65

Film on Politics and School Breakfast Program (Nightline Special)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

May 21

Lecture/Discussion: Introduction to Philosophy of Education

Assignment: Chapter 5

Current Events Assignment Due

May 22

Lecture/Discussion: Philosophy of Ed. (continued). Perspectives by John Dewey and Maxine Greene

Assignment: Pages 202-225.

THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION

May 23

Lecture/Discussion: Colonial period through the early Progressive era in American education

Assignment: Chapter 3, Pages 66-78

Review for Exam

May 24

Mid-Term Exam

May 25

Individual Study Day

Contextual Teaching and Learning

May 28

Memorial Day Holiday-No Class

May 29

Lecture/Discussion: Post-War era to the Present in American education

Assignment: Pages 77-96

Current Events Critiques Due

May 30

Lecture/Discussion: The Sociology and Social Context of Teaching (Society, Segregation, Inequality) What is Contextual Teaching and Learning?

Assignment: Chapters 4 and 9

Presentation of two CTL Projects

May 31

Presentations of Four CTL Projects

Film: Teaching Gay and Lesbian Issues

June 1

Lecture/Discussion: Curriculum and Pedagogy in Context and Using Films to Teach

Assignment: Chapter 7

Film: Spike Lee's Four Little Girls

Presentation of two CTL Projects

June 4

Lecture/Discussion: Educational Problems, Reform, and their Context

Assignment: Chapter 10

Presentation of final two CTL Projects

All CTL Papers Due

June 5

Lecture/Discussion: Generation X, Next, and the Hip Hop Generation

Review for Exam

June 6

Final Exam

Note: While we will adhere as much as possible to this course outline, I reserve the right to change or add course readings and assignments throughout the semester.

About the Instructor:

Dr. Derrick P. Alridge is an assistant professor in the Department of Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. He completed a Ph. D. in Educational Theory and Policy at the Pennsylvania State University in 1997 with an emphasis in American educational and intellectual history. Dr. Alridge writes and teaches primarily graduate courses on American educational and intellectual history with interests the Civil Rights Movement, contemporary social thought, Hip Hop culture, and American educational policy. His recent publications include articles in *Educational Theory*, *The Educational Forum*, *The Journal of Negro Education*, and *The Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*. His most recent projects include work on a civil rights documentary examining the desegregation of the University of Georgia, which has aired several times on Georgia Public Television.