

SYLLABUS
EADU 8020 – WebCT Online Course

ADULT EDUCATION IN THE SOCIAL CONTEXT
Fall Semester, 2006

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

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OASIS Title: AD ED IN SOC CONTXT

Class Dates: August 16- December 5, 2005

Course Description

Relevant contemporary and historical, sociological, political and economic factors that influence adult education theory and practice will be explored in this class. The social context of adult education including race, class, and gender will be analyzed in reference to how they influence the role of adult education in society.

Course Objectives

The goal of this course is to provide an *introduction* to the field of adult education through an examination of the role of adult education in society. Students are expected to complete the course with a greater understanding of:

- a) The social context within which adult education/adult learning take place
- b) The ways in which race and ethnicity, class, gender, ability and other forms of diversity impact the theory and practice of adult education
- c) The changing nature of adult education theory and practice related to major social and global trends
- d) The many ways adult educators articulate important social issues related to their areas of interest or practice in adult education.

Class Structure

The course is designed to reflect online activities based on readings, experiential/interactive work, dialogue/discussion with co-learners (students, instructor, and teaching assistant). Because of the centrality of participation, students will be expected to interact each week with the learning community (class). Your active, prepared, timely participation and critical reflection in relation to the readings, students'/instructor's comments, and other materials is the centerpiece of this class.

Study Blocks: The basic unit in this course is the *Study Block*. A *Study Block* is a two-week period during which related topics are developed, studies discussed, and hopefully, applied in your everyday activities as adult education practitioners. A listing of the *Study Blocks* is available via the *Course Schedule* hyperlink on the course homepage. Via the *Study Blocks* hyperlink, you will find a thorough description of the content and requirements for each study block for the two-week period. *Study Blocks* will begin on: August 21, September 5, September 18, October 3, October 16, October 30, November 13, and November 27. The first few days of the class are for you to become familiar with WebCT, your cohort and the on-line course materials.

Required Texts:

Available at the UGA book stores or our favorite online e-business bookseller:

- Merriam, S. & Brockett, R. (1997). *The profession and practice of adult education: An introduction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (**MB** [Merriam & Brockett] in the course schedule and study blocks).
- Wilson, A.L. & Hayes, E.L. (Eds.) (2001). *The handbook of adult education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. (**HB** [Handbook] in the course schedule and study blocks).

Assignments and Due Dates:

1. Read and reflect on the materials prior to engaging in online discussion.
2. Meaningful participation each week: A minimum of *five substantive* and timely postings per “study block.”
3. Select one of the two following projects described below:

- Option 1: Adult Education Observation and Paper—*due on or before September 28th*
Option 2: Movie Review—*due on or before November 2*

4. Complete Final Essay —*due on or before Dec. 1*

Format & Submission Guidelines: All course assignments are due on or before 4:30 of the due dates indicated and must be in a format compatible with Microsoft Word (e.g. .doc, .rtf). Late papers will not be accepted. To submit your assignments (project paper & final essay); upload your electronic document via the Assignment Drop Box on WebCT. APA Style (5th Edition, 2001) is to be used for paper layout and for all citations. (*Note:* This edition of the *Publication Manual* of the APA is an important part of your professional library. A link to a summary of the most frequently used elements of APA, 5th edition, is available via the *Resources* page on WebCT.)

Summary of Evaluation and Grading:

- Class Participation 33%
- Project Paper 33%
- Final Essay 33%

Grading Scale: A = 100-91 B = 90-81 C = 80-71; the plus and minus system may be used.

Students with a sound grasp of the material and a demonstrated ability to analyze this material at a satisfactory to above average level for graduate students can expect to receive a grade of “B.” Grades below “B” will be assigned for performance that is less than satisfactory. The grade of “A” will be reserved to designate excellence. This will require not only a sound grasp and analysis of the material at a graduate level, but also a clear capacity to synthesize and critique the materials. There is no preconceived designation of the number of class members to receive each grade, nor any ceiling on the number of “A’s” to be assigned if all students exhibit the high standards of performance expected for that grade.

Note: Please see the graduate school bulletin regarding the assignment of incomplete grades. These are reserved for situations in which a student who has otherwise been making satisfactory progress is unable to complete final course requirements due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the instructor must be contacted to negotiate a reasonable extension of time. Barring such a situation, the grade will be assigned on the date required by the registrar’s office as earned according to the distribution described above.

Assignment Descriptions:

Project Option 1: Adult Education Observation Paper—5 pages (Due on or before September 28th)

This paper is based on your attendance at an adult education class, workshop, presentation, or event that occurs in the community, outside of your work or university setting. This educational experience or event could be a place where formal, non-formal, or informal learning occurs could be sponsored by non-government (NGO) entity in civil society, business, or government and could take place in a public or private sector. Your selection should reflect an interest that you have in a particular area of adult education. It is helpful, though not necessary, to do these observations in pairs. The reason is that two observers can usually “see” more than one. If you choose to do an observation in pairs, take note, during the write up of the differences between yours and your partner’s comments.

There are two purposes for this assignment: First, it is to expose you to an adult education organization, process, learners, and educator with which you are not familiar. Second, it is to give you an opportunity to apply some of the theoretical concepts relative to social context which we will be discussing in class.

Visit an adult education class or experience. Take the opportunity to schedule some time with the person in charge of the program. Learn about the purpose and goals for the educational experience. You may also acquire some of the written information available about the program if it is available.

It will be helpful to review class readings to identify key concepts from the literature that will help you during your "observation".

Once you have educated yourself about the program, go and observe it. Take notes, just as you would if you were conducting research. What macro-environmental trend or issue did the experience address? Note the relationship between the adult educator and the learners. How was the learning experience managed? Who was responsible for managing it? Note the atmosphere of the class. Are all participants equally recognized? How is power shared in the class? Are there any social, financial, or political issues that shape the class? (NB. Some of these may be difficult to "see". You may have to ask questions of program staff or the director to learn more about these.) Describe how the experience was evaluated? What is your assessment of the experience and why?

Summarize what you have learned in a report. The report should be no more than **five pages**. Papers will be evaluated on:

- Critical observation and assessment
- Integration with course readings and discussions
- Judgment of lessons learned, potential application or implications
- Appropriate grammar and correct APA format

Project Option 2: Movie Review—5 pages (Due on or before November 2nd)

Select one of the movies listed below. (Please contact the instructor if you wish to review a movie that is not on the list.) Each movie listed incorporates adult learning as a central aspect of the plot. After viewing the movie, describe, analyze and review the adult learning experience. What macro-environmental trend or issue did the experience address, if any? Describe the adult education organization (if applicable), learning activity(ies), the learner(s), the adult educator(s), and the conditions or circumstances in which the learning takes place. Are there any social, financial, or political issues that shape the experience? What are the factors that seem to influence learning (either to promote or to inhibit) it? What concepts from the class readings were evident? What is your reaction to the learning experience in the movie?

The review should be no more than **five pages**. Papers will be evaluated on:

- Critical description and assessment
- Integration with course readings and discussions
- Judgment of lessons learned, potential application or implications
- Appropriate grammar and correct APA format

1. Stanley and Iris (1990) (PG-13). Jane Fonda, Robert DeNiro.

Synopsis: Two blue-collar workers help each other break free of their own personal prisons. For Stanley, the inability to read or write has plagued him all his life. Iris has just lost her husband and is suddenly emotionally paralyzed. Together they help each other to learn, live and, ultimately, to love again. (1 hr. 47 min.)

2. Renaissance Man (1994) (PG-13). Danny Davito, Gregory Hines, Cliff Robertson.

Synopsis: An advertising executive loses his high-paying job and finds work teaching remedial classes to Army recruits; he soon finds out that he doesn't really belong in the armed forces, but fights for his job and his style of doing things anyway. (2 hr. 8 min.)

3. Back to School (1986) (PG-13). Rodney Dangerfield, Sally Kellerman, Robert Downey.

Synopsis: A self-made millionaire decides to join his only son who is having difficulty in fitting in at school as a freshman in college. This impulse gesture sets him on a path to much laughter, a little romance, a lesson in things that money can't buy and unanimous acclaim as the most popular man on campus. (1 hr. 36 min.)

4. The Matrix (1999) (R) or its sequel. Keanu Reeves, Lawrence Fishburne, Carrie-Annie Moss.

Synopsis: Software employee and sometime hacker Thomas 'Neo' Anderson finds his world turned upside down when he learns the truth about 'reality' - it's all an illusion, an elaborate artificial reality known as The Matrix. Anderson teams up with an underground resistance movement dedicated to liberating humanity from the thrall of the machines and learns that he may be The One, the savior who will overthrow the computers and their deadly agents. (1 hr.36 mins.) (Have fun with this one and the questions it raises about artificial intelligence, virtual reality, ethics and potential futures for adult education.)

5. Mona Lisa Smiles (2003) (PG-13). Julie Roberts, Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles.

Synopsis: Set in 1953, Katherine Watson (Roberts) is a free-spirited graduate of UCLA who accepts a teaching post at Wellesley College, a women-only school where the students are torn between the repressive mores of the time and their longing for intellectual freedom. (1hr.75 mins.)

6. Quiz Show (1994) (PG-13). Robert Redford, John Turturro.

Synopsis: An idealistic young lawyer (Rob Morrow) working for a Congressional subcommittee in the late 1950s discovers that TV quiz shows are being fixed. His investigation focuses on two contestants on the short "Twenty-One": Herbert Stempel (John Turturro), a brash working-class Jew from Queens, and Charles Van Doren (Ralph Fiennes), the patrician scion of one of the American's leading literary families. Based on a true story. (2 hrs.13 mins.)

7. Italian for Beginners (2002) (R). Anders W. Berthelsen, Ann Eleanora Jørgensen.

Synopsis: Six people in a small Danish town are all in such despair over their lives that their only source of happiness is the weekly Italian class they all take. Andreas is a minister whose wife has recently died. While staying in a local hotel, he befriends the lonely concierge, who has a crush on an Italian waitress from the hotel cafe. She, meanwhile, must deal with her rude and aggressive boss.

Two women in the class are both caring for elderly parents, and both are having difficulties with their bad-tempered relatives. (1 hrs.40 mins.)

Final Essay (Due on or before December 1)

Write a 2,500 word essay on one of the below topics with support from the *Proceedings* in AERC (info available via *Resources* page on WebCT), recent publications from ERIC, or journal articles from *Adult Education Quarterly*, *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, or other journals in reference list, and also citing class texts. Your essay should contain at least five authoritative citations/references.

1. It can be argued that papers presented at AERC or articles written in the last 3 years represent cutting-edge issues in adult education. Drawing on current papers or articles, what would you say are the meaning and board purposes of adult education? How does this compare with the materials that we explored in the class?
2. Corporate interests have influences the field and practice of adult education in various ways. Some researchers have argues that they have essentially co-opted adult education, causing it to largely abandon its social action orientation, formally designed to improve lives of individualism and promote the public good. Other writers have contested this notion. How are these two beliefs negotiated in the literature?
3. It can be argued that adult education, under the influence of western industrial/technological societies, does not meet the fundamental development needs of third world nations (less technologically developed). What do scholars have to say about this? Reflect on their thinking in light of your readings/experience in the course.
4. "Adult Education is not pursued for ulterior rewards: entrance requirements, exams, academic degrees in true adult education." (Eduard Lindeman, The meaning of adult learning" Progressive Education Jan.-Mar. 1929). Do many writings in the last few years reflect this? Should they? Why or why not? What papers or articles seem to support Lindeman's notion?
5. Based on the roots of adult education, its current theory and practice base, as well as the social context, what would you project to be the state of adult education in the year 2023? How do the recent papers/writings for discussions from the class inform your projections?
6. Construct a question of your own and answer it. The question must be approved by the instructor before proceeding.

Your essay will be evaluated on:

- Strength and justification of position
- Integration of references, course readings and discussions
- Appropriate grammar and APA style.

University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy:

All academic work must meet the standards contained in A Culture of Honesty. Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. A Culture of Honesty is the University of Georgia's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty and can be found online at <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/>. UGA Student Honor Code states "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others."