

**Foundations of Education:  
The School in American Society  
Course Syllabus**

Investigation of the role of formal education within American society and of the forces within society that shape and constrain schools and their effectiveness. Drawing on the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, comparative education, philosophy, and others, the course considers competing social and personal purposes for schools, the impact of race, class, gender, technology, and other social forces on the problems and possibilities of schools, contemporary issues in education, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, teachers, and students, among other topics. Relationships among education, schooling, and teaching and learning within the U.S. context are the focus. Students will reflect on their own education, schooling, and learning and on the teaching and education they expect to provide to others.

**Course Objectives:** In this course, students will:

1. Discuss the conflicting personal, social, and national purposes for education, and how the dominant purpose shapes the experiences and achievement of students and teachers;
2. Examine the historical and contemporary economic, political, cultural, and social functions of schools within their contexts;
3. Understand schools as embedded institutions rather than autonomous agencies;
4. Examine school reform efforts historically and contemporaneously;
5. Analyze the influences of race, social class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, immigrant status, and gender on school experiences and achievement;
6. Begin to articulate an ethically defensible philosophy of education;
7. Understand the rights and responsibilities of teachers and students;
8. Describe the politics of education, curriculum, teaching, and school organization;
9. Understand the nature and influence of social power in educational opportunity and meaning;
10. Consider the relationship between the ideal of public education and democratic aspirations;
11. Explore the influence of technology on learning.

**Topical Outline:**

1. Historical development of the American school: Ideals and realities; Historical forces that influence institutional structures and practices; Prologue to contemporary issues
2. Sociological and anthropological considerations: Race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, immigrant status, and formal schooling; Power and education; Cultural diversity, forms of cultural capital, and providing public education for all constituents; Teaching and classroom life
3. Teaching: Teaching as craft, occupation, and profession; Constraints and freedoms; Rights and responsibilities of teachers and students; Codes of ethics; Teacher associations and unions
4. Philosophical and political considerations: Civic purposes, democracy, the state, and business; The politics of curriculum, classroom organization, and pedagogy; Who controls schools? For what purposes? What are the preferred ways of achieving various educational purposes?
5. Education and economics
6. Conflicting ends: private, civic, human capital
7. Contemporary issues: School reform, charter schools, vouchers, privatization, declining tax support, standards, testing, curriculum, and other challenges
8. Law and education

**Course Schedule:**

1-15-03 Introduction and goal setting

1-22-03 Educational purposes and philosophies

- Spring, Ch. 1
- 1-29-03 Teaching and Teachers  
Spring, Ch. 2  
Video: Excerpts from “Only a Teacher”  
(see also <http://www.pbs.org/onlyateacher/>)
- 2-5-03 Teaching: Work, Labor, and Profession  
Spring, Ch. 3
- 2-12-03 History of Schooling in the U.S.  
Johnson, et al. Chs. 12-13\*  
(see also <http://bama.ua.edu/~slucas/cay/chapters.html>, Learning Together: A History of Coeducation in American Public Schools, Tyack and Hansot, and <http://www.arc.org/erase/history.html>, ERASE Expose Racism & Advance School Excellence)
- 2-19-03 Students and How They Differ  
Spring, Chs. 4-5  
Video: Understanding Prejudice
- 2-26-03 Teaching across Similarities and Differences  
Spring, Chs. 6-7  
**Initial essay, a critical analysis of your own schooling, due**
- 3-5-03 Field Trip to W.R. Coile Middle School After-School Program
- 3-12-03 In Classrooms  
Ladson-Billings, Chs. 1-4

- 3-26-03 In Classrooms  
Ladson-Billings, Chs. 5-7
- 4-2-03 Alternatives to and Variations on Public Schooling  
Spring, Ch. 8  
**Bring in current event with an educational legal issue for 4/16 presentation**
- 4-9-03 Educational Change and Reform  
Spring, Ch. 9
- 4-16-03 Curriculum and Technology  
Spring, Ch. 10  
**Present current event and its relevance to course material**
- 4-23-03 Politics, Education, and the Law  
Spring, Ch. 11
- 4-30-03 Conclusion: Teachers and Learners  
Kohl or Kozol
- 5-8-03 **Final essay, comparing your schooling with general public schooling experiences in the U.S., due** (no class meeting)

**Required Textbooks:**

Ladson-Billings, Gloria  
1994 *The Dreamkeepers: Success Teachers of African American Children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.  
Spring, Joel  
2002 *American Education*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

**Choice of One:**

Kohl, Herbert  
1998 *The Discipline of Hope: Learning from a Lifetime of Teaching*. New York: The New Press.  
Kozol, Jonathan  
2000 *Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope*. New York: Perennial

**\*Material on Library Reserve** (for electronic reserves, the password is founded)

Johnson, James A., Victor L. Dupuis, Diann Musial, Gene E. Hall, and Donna M. Gollnick  
1996 *Introduction to the Foundations of American Education*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Chapters 12-13. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**Course Requirements:**

1. We expect regular attendance and will take excessive absences (missing more than 6 hours of a 3-credit course) into account in the final course grade.
2. We expect people to come to class prepared and to contribute to class discussions and activities. Frequent lack of preparation or failure to contribute will also be taken into account in the final course grade.
3. All students are required to have and to use an electronic mail account. These are available free in the Office of Information Technology, Aderhold 232 or from Enterprise Information Technology Services (EITS). We may make periodic email assignments. These will all be assessed on a pass-fail basis. Failure to complete email assignments will be taken into account in the final course grade.
4. All students are required to complete a series of assignments. The final grade will be based on the following distribution:
 

a.	Attendance, preparation, and discussion:	10
a.	Initial essay (due 2/26/03)	20
b.	Final essay (due 5/8/03)	20
c.	Class presentation (due 4/16/03)	20
d.	Pop essays on the readings (Seven short essays of 5 points each; only	30

the six with the highest points will count)

Total Points 100

Grading follows that University of Georgia policy:

100-90% = A	79-70% = C	below 60% = F
89-80% = B	69-60% = D	

### **Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Disabilities:**

University of Georgia policy is to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Please let us know if you have a disability request.

### **University of Georgia Academic Honesty Policy:**

All of us are expected to abide by the standards for academic honesty adopted by the university. Learning to appropriately quote and paraphrase and to cite and attribute sources is a skill that is key to honest and creative scholarship. We expect all students to review the guidelines at the website [http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty/culture\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm). If you have questions about what would be considered violations of the standards, please raise them in class or ask us.

### **Need for Editorial Assistance:**

Requirements for the course depend on substantial writing. Students who need editorial assistance, such as some individuals who are not native English speakers, are encouraged to make such arrangements. A good place to start is the UGA Writing Center: <http://www.english.uga.edu/~writingcenter/home.html>.

### **Nature of This Course:**

Education, schooling, and teaching involve controversial topics. People have strong feelings, values, and beliefs that affect how they view these subjects. Although diversity of opinions is central to the reflection encouraged in this course, everyone is expected to accurately represent the variety of views discussed. We may agree to disagree, but we must be able to express the viewpoint with which we disagree. Sound thinking depends, then, on respectful listening and sometimes respectful disagreement. It depends on what the philosopher Hannah Arendt called "visiting"; visiting is listening carefully to what others have to say, engaging in interactive dialogue with others, and respecting differences in perspectives.

### **Instructors:**

I, Monica Knight, can be reached by email at [teachdawg@yahoo.com](mailto:teachdawg@yahoo.com) or by telephone at 706-357-5318 after 4:00. I am a full-time public school teacher in the Clarke County School District. I have been teaching seventh grade mathematics for the past eight years at W.R. Coile Middle School. In addition to teaching, I am the director of W.R. Coile Middle School's After-School Extended Care Program called Operation READ (Reaching, Exceeding, and Actualizing Dreams). I am also a doctoral student in the Department of Social Foundations. I completed my B.S. from North Georgia College and State University in 1995 in middle grades education and my MEd, also in middle grades education with a focus on multicultural education, from the University of Georgia in 1998. My research interests include black communal development through education, the history of black education in the South, the culture of teaching and teachers, socio-cultural influences on education practice, such as poverty, class, and ethnicity, and the revisioning of teacher education programs. My personal interests include pugs, camping, coffee shop discussions, school politics, grant writing, and community development through service learning projects with children.

I, Judith Preissle, can be reached by telephone at 542-6489, by e-mail preferably at [preissle@coe.uga.edu](mailto:preissle@coe.uga.edu), and in my office, Aderhold 624E, from 2-4 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and by appointment. Preissle is pronounced price-lee with the accent on the first syllable. I work in the social foundations of education program here at the University of Georgia as well as in the College of Education's qualitative and ethnographic research program. My degrees are an A.B. in history from Grinnell College in 1964 and an M.A. (University of Minnesota) in 1971 and an Ed.D. (Indiana University) in 1975, concentrating in anthropology and education. I taught social studies and language arts to middle school students for six years. My scholarly interests and publications focus on sociocultural theory, gender studies, classroom social life, immigration and education, and qualitative research design. My personal interests include books, music, gardening, birding, miniature schnauzers, and ballroom dancing.

