

Social Foundations of Education
EFND 2110 Schools in U.S. Society/Critical Issues in Education
Fall 2007

EFND 2110

Class meets Tues/Thurs 2:00-3:15 Aderhold- Room #430

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Office Hours: before/after class or by appointment

Overview of the Course, purposes:

This course is an examination of education in the United States, particularly public school education, to provide insights into the history of development of American education as well as the contemporary reform landscape of imperatives, persistent problems, dilemmas, and opportunities that are most pertinent to students planning to enter the teaching profession. We shall examine historical, sociocultural, political, economic, and philosophical aspects of American education, considering its unique and universal features, in global a perspective. We shall survey the different periods in the development history, and the different perspectives on whose interests are served by American education. A major thrust of the course will be to examine issues and dilemmas in past, present, and future education and the roles of teachers, students, communities, government, and special interests. Issues and challenges related to the dominant culture, dominated and dispossessed groups, equality/inequality, and diversity will be other major threads running through the course. For students contemplating a career in teaching, in any field, this pre-education course provides a broad overview of the evolution of the American public education system, and of the issues and challenges--the realities that teachers face in schools in Georgia and elsewhere, in lights of contemporary developments in society and locale realities that impact schools and teaching, and an overview of teacher-issues and reform mandates that impact teaching. The course is NOT a methods course focusing on teaching methods and curriculum (these are part of the various teacher education programs). **Students should view this course as an opportunity to reflect on your own schooling experience, on teaching as a career and to begin reflecting on the challenges and opportunities they will face in the classroom as teachers.**

Objectives for the course:

- a)Cultivate an awareness of the complexities of education in the United States; drawing from personal experience and course material.
- b)Examine the diverse roles, purposes, and outcomes of education in historical context.
- c)Consider the diverse educational experiences on different groups in American society.
- d)Contemplate the realities facing teachers, students, and communities regarding reform mandates, local development and change issues, and aspects of the teaching profession.

Course Activities:

Class meetings will form the backbone of the course in the form of lecture discussions and group presentation of questions/issues raised by the principal texts for the course *as well as* other material in selected video/film showings; and considerations of data on key websites.

Reading and reflecting, writing on your own will be an essential part of the course.

Keep abreast of the readings as they are scheduled through the term; also allot time for your work on the assignments for the course.

Required Texts, Readings:

a) Spring, J.H. (2005) *American Education* Twelfth Edition. Read whole text, all chapters.

Also note Spring's suggestions for additional readings and websites. This is the main text for the course; consider the content in conjunction with lectures/presentations. IN BOOKSTORE

b) Carter, Forrest. (2001) *The Education of Little Tree*. Read whole text. IN BOOKSTORE

c) Own Choice Book. Students will be required to read an education themed book of their own choice (with prior approval from instructor) in order to prepare an analytical and reflective essay about education and their own school experiences. Students can use personal collections, UGA libraries, to include the curriculum library in Aderhold, and commercial book stores to locate a book that interests them.

Additional Readings/Sources:

a) *School: the Story of American Public Education (2001-2)*. Text/PBS series and the www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool website with links and pictures.

b) Noll, J.W.(2002) *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues*. 12th Ed. Go to www.dushkin.com. Copies of selected articles will be used in class, as required readings and handouts.

c)Periodicals such as (*Chronicle of Higher Ed.,Ed. Leadership, Social Education, Phi Delta Kappa, Harvard Educational review, Education Week*)and newspapers/magazines (*Atlanta J&C, NY Times, Washington Post, Time, Newsweek*).

d)Websites: For example, Georgia education stats in www.doe.k12.ga.us; census data from <http://factfinder.census.gov> and www.census.org; educational reform data and issues in www.ets.org and www.nces.org; Georgia Professional Standards Commission website (for teacher rights, student rights, legal questions) www.gapsc.org/; suggestions for using Taking Sides issues in www.dushkin.com. You will need to obtain information from these sites to complete assignments in the course. Also plan to conduct online searches.

Assignments/Projects:

A. Attend all classes! Take notes, keep up with the readings as scheduled and announced. Topics and related readings, due dates for assignments will be announced weekly in class, in advance and also on the syllabus. NOTE: Midterm and final exams will draw heavily from class discussions and presentations. Attendance will be taken at regular intervals.

B. Group Class Facilitation- You and your assigned group members will lead and facilitate an entire class session based on a “Taking Sides” article, engaging the class in a guided discussion on the “yes” and “no” sides as presented by the authors, and all group members will be expected to provide their own insights and opinions of the topics while also querying the class for their opinions.

Choose 1 of the following 2*(only; no extra credit):

* **C. Write a focused opinion** piece on selected issue as portrayed in “Taking Sides” and in other text readings and class discussions. This short essay will be your own personal analysis and reflections, due before midterm.

* **D. Own Choice Book Review:** Write a review of an education themed book to include a summary/overview, critique, and own personal reflections of the topics explored in this book.

E. Required Field Experience- Students need to do a minimum of 10 hours of community based field experience. Students will select a placement as outlined in the Field Experience instruction pamphlet.

F. Report summarizing your Field Experience.

*Rubrics and grading standards will be provided for each of the above written assignments and the group class facilitation. Assignments submitted late will be penalized per day.

Examinations:

A) Book Quiz over *The Education of Little Tree*

B) Midterm: Tues. October 9(tentative), held in class, based on lectures/presentations and all readings to date.

C) Final Examination: (date to be confirmed) will be cumulative covering material in the entire course and requiring students to reflect on their own experience relative to the content of this course. No exam exemptions are given.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance at all sessions is required. Information and notes will NOT be posted on the web. The final exam will directly address material presented in class, not just material in the texts. Notify your instructor and provide documentation (doctor’s note, court summons, etc.) for an excused absence or for failure to submit an assignment on its due date. Though not a formal part of a student’s grade, attendance and participation verification is

most often used to advance a grade to the next higher level. The end of semester Field experience mini-presentations will be assessed as part of this category.

Grade Determination: Your final grade will be determined as follows:

10% Group Class Facilitation

*15% Focused Opinion Piece

*15% Choice Book Review

10% Field Experience (10 hour observation and 4 page written summary of experience)

10% Field Experience mini-presentation

15% Book Quiz *Little Tree*

20% Midterm

20% Final Examination

100%

*Only choose 1 of these written assignments.

Academic Honesty Code at UGA:

There will be strict adherence to the UGA Academic Honesty Code in this course. You are required to be familiar with the specifics and provisions of the UGA Academic Honesty Code (consult the website under Office of the Vice President for Instruction, www.uga.edu/ovpi) on cheating, plagiarism (including use of downloaded web information without referencing), signing in for another student, and other forms of dishonesty and unauthorized assistance. You will be asked to sign a pledge that your written assignments are your own work.

Note: in this course, “authorized assistance” is from Ms. Oliver only.

Help, Other Considerations:

**Attend all sessions, notify instructor in advance of excusable absences; non-attendance and failure to submit assignments on due dates will hurt your grade.

**Grade Policy: A+=superior work/95 and above; A=excellent work/90-94; B+=87-89; B=84-86; B-=80-83; C+=77-79; C=74-76;C-=70-73; D=below average, unsatisfactory work

****PLEASE!** No food in class

Cell phones **Off or on vibrate!

**No laptop use during class time.

**No hats or caps permitted during exams

Key Dates: *to be confirmed

Aug.16- First Class
Jan. 16-21 Drop/Add
Sept. 3 - Labor Day
Oct. 9*- Mid-term Exam
Oct. 12 - W/WF Cutoff Date
Oct. 25-26 - Fall Break
Nov. 21-23 – Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 6 - Last Day of Class
Dec. 7 - Reading Day
Dec.* - Final Exam
Dec. 18 - Grades Due

Tentative Sequence of Topics, readings: Time frame (tentative)

***denotes homework reading for the following class session**

- August 16 Introduction- to include required texts; syllabus; attendance policy
- August 21 Go over Field Experience requirement; sign up for “Taking Sides” issues; unique and universal features of American education (discussion in groups)
- August 23 Review unique and universal features of American education; Origins, historical development of education in USA part 1; education set-up in Georgia
*(Spring: Chapters 1; begin reading *Little Tree*)
- August 28 Spring Chapter 1: The Goals of Public Schooling; origins of US education part 2
*(Spring: Chapter 2)
- August 30 Spring Chapter 2: Education and Equality of Opportunity; origins of US education part 3
- September 4 First class presentation- Have Public Schools Failed Society?
*(Spring: Chapter 3)
- September 6 Spring: Chapter 3 Equality of Educational Opportunity: Race, Gender, and Special Needs; education of the Cherokee
- September 11 Spring: Chapter 4 Student Diversity; issues of class and poverty; review for Little Tree Quiz
- September 13 Book Quiz over *Little Tree*
- September 18-20 View the *The Education of Little Tree*
*(Spring: Chapter 4)

- September 25 Second class presentation- Do Black Students Need an Afrocentric Curriculum?
*(Spring Chapter 5)
- September 27 Spring; Chapter 5 Multicultural Education and Seculturalization; origins of US
education part 4
- October 2 Third class presentation-Is Full Inclusion of Disabled Students Desirable?
- October 4 Review for the Mid-term exam
- October 9 Mid-term exam
- October 11 Fourth class presentation-Should Bilingual Education Programs be abandoned?
*(Spring: Chapter 6, Local control, Choice, Charter Schools, and
Commercialism)
****focused opinion paper due****
- October 16 Spring: Chapter 6, Local control, Charter Schools, and Commercialism
- October 18 Fifth class presentation-Should the Curriculum be Standardized for all?
*(Spring: Chapter Seven)
- October 23 Spring: Chapter Seven: Power and Control at the State and National Levels
- October 25-26 Fall Break
- October 30 Sixth class presentation-Should National Goals, and Standards Guide School
Reform?
*(Spring: Chapter Eight)
****own choice book review due****
- November 1 Spring: Chapter Eight: The Profession of Teaching; origins of U.S. education
part 5
- November 6 Seventh class presentation-Should Tracking and Ability Grouping be
Eliminated?
*(Spring: Chapter Nine)
- November 8 Spring: Chapter Nine: Textbooks, etc.; origins of U.S. education part 6
- November 13 Eighth class presentation-Should Multiculturalism Permeate the Curriculum?
*(Spring: Chapter Ten)
- November 15 Spring: Chapter Ten: The Courts and Schools; origins of U.S. education part 7
****minority profile paper due****

November 20 Ninth class presentation-Does School Violence Warrant a Zero-Tolerance Policy?

November 27 Tenth class presentation-Can “Character Education” Reverse Moral Decline?

November 29 Field Experience round robin and mini-presentations

December 4 Field Experience round robin and mini-presentations

December 6 Review for the final exam