

INITIAL FIELD EXPERIENCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

ESOC 2450/2450L / SPRING SEMESTER, 2006
Wednesdays, 12:45—2:30 pm, Aderhold 627

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Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

In-school observation of middle and secondary grades in social studies. Non-traditional format. Three credit hours. Seminar Hours: two hours per week. Field Experience: four hours per week for fifteen weeks (sixty hours total).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Initial Field Experience is designed to be an introduction to curriculum and instruction in secondary social studies. A primary requirement of the course is the sixty-hour field experience practicum, to be completed in a secondary school. Students will document observations of the school context, administration, teachers, students, and resources available for instruction. In addition, students will explore questions about the nature, purpose, and practices of social studies in the modern school curriculum. Students will develop an initial rationale for teaching social studies. If students decide to continue in the program, and are admitted by the faculty, this rationale will be refined throughout the program and will ultimately become a document included in a professional teaching ePortfolio completed during the student teaching semester of the secondary social studies program.

ESOC 2450 is a prerequisite for admission to the undergraduate secondary social studies teacher education program, which leads to a recommendation for initial certification. Since the social studies program has been designated a “high demand” major, there are limited spaces available. This course serves as the first benchmark for the faculty to assess students’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions to enter the teaching profession as a social studies educator.

At the conclusion of this course you should be able to:

- 1 Explore ideas about powerful social studies teaching and learning, such as those proposed by the National Council for Social Studies.
- 2 Document and reflect on observations of school contexts, culture, administration, teachers, students, and resources available for instruction.
- 3 Articulate and reason about aims, purposes, and practices in social studies education.
- 4 Develop an initial rationale for teaching and learning in social studies education.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RESOURCES

Loewen, James L., *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).

Parker, Walter C., *Teaching Democracy: Unity and Diversity in Public Life* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003).

National Council for Social Studies, *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Expectations of Excellence* (NCSS: Washington, D.C., 1994).

You will also have an account in *LiveText*; info on that will be forthcoming. **All texts will be made available to you via our LiveText site or will be distributed in class.**

COURSE THEMES

In this program, explorations of teaching and learning in social studies draw heavily on your experiences in secondary classroom field experiences. We will also draw on several core themes to provide common references that inform our reflection and collaborative discussions. These themes function as intellectual connectors useful for bringing together the varied issues likely to appear in the content of this course. The themes will be referenced in assignments and discussion, so you are encouraged to develop a working familiarity with them early in the semester.

The Four Part Framework for Developing Effective Teaching Skills. This course is designed to raise questions that revolve around a “Four Part Framework” for teacher education. The four parts of this framework can be thought of as a checklist of what the program should do for you and are described in more detail below.

Part One. Encourages development of an articulated and working mission/rationale/vision statement for social studies teaching rooted in a sophisticated understanding of “education for democratic citizenship.”

Part Two. Encourages development of an understanding of what you would do in schools to make the mission you described in Part One a reality.

Part Three. Encourages critical awareness of the obstacles you are likely to encounter as you attempt to carry out the goals defined in Part Two to make the mission of Part One happen.

Part Four. Encourages thoughtful reflection on ideas about how you will persist in developing your rationale and your skills as a teacher given the obstacles identified in Part Three as you attempt to carry out the stuff of Part Two to make the mission of Part One happen.

(1) Rationale-Based Practice. Decisions about what and how to teach—and about how you carry out your role as a social studies teacher—ought to be based on an understanding of what you hope to accomplish as a social studies teacher (i.e. your rationale). Rationales not only address what you do and want to do in your school, but also how your work relates to the broader social conditions of schooling, and the contributions your work makes to society at large. Pulling these complicated ideas together is more difficult than it may seem to be at first and, as such, we will spend a great deal of our time together exploring ways of effectively developing a coherent and valuable rationale for teaching.

(2) Reflective Teaching. Being a reflective teacher involves constant questioning: questioning of yourself, of your motives for teaching the way you do, questioning other people (including colleagues, students, parents, and others), questioning the conditions in which schooling occurs, and even questioning social relationships as a whole. Reflective teachers are mindful of and aware of the complexity of teaching. A reflective teacher consumes himself with the important questions of practice that all teachers should be aware of. To some extent, a *reflective* teacher is an *effective* one; by asking lots of questions, teachers open the door to improved practice and markedly better classroom experiences. Remember, of course, that not all questions are created equal. In this course we will be less concerned with finding the “right” answers to problems of practice than we will be with asking the right kinds of questions.

(3) What is “Good Teaching”? Good teaching is defined in this course as teaching that leads to active student engagement in worthwhile learning. Your success in this course will be

directly tied to your ability to develop an understanding of what these two concepts mean and how they can, and will, impact your practice as a teacher.

(4) GSTEP Framework Standards. The Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) has produced a framework of six standards designed to identify the essential competencies of *exemplary* teachers. The six standards, and each of their sub-standards, are comprehensive and ambitious. They form the basis of the evaluation form used by your Cooperating Teacher and Field Instructor during your student teaching experience. They also form the structure for the body of the ePortfolio assignment to be completed at the conclusion of the student teaching experience. The framework standards are:

<i>One</i>	Content and Curriculum
<i>Two</i>	Knowledge of Students and Their Learning
<i>Three</i>	Learning Environments
<i>Four</i>	Assessment
<i>Five</i>	Planning and Instruction
<i>Six</i>	Professionalism

ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADES

Field Observations. The sixty-hour practicum experience associated with ESOC 2450 is intended to provide students with opportunities to reflect on school contexts, culture, instructional practices, and curriculum. Assignments throughout the term are designed to direct your attention to various issues related to life in schools, with special attention paid to the role of social studies in education. This experience will feature a good deal of observation, but the intent is to go beyond passive watching. Students are encouraged to work with cooperating teachers to negotiate active involvement in teaching activities. Such involvement might include working with an individual student on an assignment, assisting with a cooperative learning activity, and/or teaching a lesson.

Reaction Papers. Reading and writing assignments will be made throughout the semester. There are 13 planned Reaction Papers, though the final number of papers you write may change as the semester progresses. Reaction papers account for 50% of your final grade for the course.

Social Studies Rationale. At the end of the semester, you will write your rationale for teaching social studies. A rationale explains what you believe should be the purpose, content, and method of teaching social studies. Rationales are always a work in progress for reflective teachers. For those who continue in the program, the rationale will undergo revision and refinement. The rationale you produce in 2450 is an initial statement of your beliefs about teaching and learning in social studies. The rationale is also part of the application materials required for admission to the secondary social studies professional sequence. The rationale counts for 25% of your final grade.

Attendance and Participation. This course is based on the thoughtful contributions of every class member. Thus, your punctual attendance is required at each class meeting, as is responsible class participation. Please notify the instructor, via phone or email, if conditions arise that prevent you from being able to meet these expectations. Participation is expected in seminar meetings and also via a minimum of four postings to class *LiveText* discussions. Your attendance and participation grade will be determined at the end of the semester based on my assessment of the frequency, nature, and quality of your contributions to the course. This requirement accounts for 25% of the final grade.

University of Georgia Grade Scale. Your final grade will be calculated based on the percentages described above and converted to a letter grade using UGA's approved scale:

A (100—90) / B (89—80) / C (79—70) / D (69—60) / F (59—0)

ACADEMIC HONESTY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and other members of the University community. A policy on academic honesty (and procedural guidelines for adjudication of alleged violations of academic honesty) has been developed to serve these goals. Academic honesty means performing all academic work without plagiarizing, cheating, lying, tampering, stealing, receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information that is not common knowledge (unless that assistance or use is authorized by the person responsible for supervising that academic work or fairly attributed to the source of assistance or information).

Academic honesty is vital to the very fabric and integrity of the University of Georgia . All students must comply with an appropriate and sound academic honesty policy and code of honest behavior. All members of the University community are responsible for and involved in bringing about an honest University and all must work together to ensure the success of the policy and code of behavior.

The Student Honor Code. All students agree to abide by the honor code when they sign the application for admission to the University. A full rendering of the University's statement on academic honesty, entitled "A Culture of Honesty—UGA's Academic Honesty System," can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi>.

Students and faculty who suspect that an act of academic dishonesty has taken place should contact the Office of the Vice President for Instruction in Old College at 706.542.0432.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(1) Course Introduction / Jan 11

Dr Todd Dinkelman; program overview and application process; field placements, LiveText, syllabus review.

(2) What is the Purpose of School? / Jan 18

Readings: Mark Edmundson "On the Uses of a Liberal Education: As Lite Entertainment for Bored College Students" <http://www.student.virginia.edu/~decweb/lite/>; Richard Levine "On Liberal Education: The Purpose of a College Education."

Assignment: Write a 4-5 page reaction to Edmundson's critique. Some of the questions you *may* want to consider: Where is he correct and where does he get things wrong? Is his description of students apt? What do you see as the purpose of college and education in general? To what extent you ever thought about the purpose of schooling/education (college or high school)? Have your views or perspectives on the purpose of education and schooling changed by reading these articles? Why or why not? Do you see a big difference in the purpose of education for college students and K-12 students? Why or why not? How and to what extent does thinking about one's own experiences with education and schooling impact how their approach as a teacher?

(3) What is Social Studies? / Jan 25

Readings: Goodlad, 93-129, 210-213.

Assignment: Write a 4-5 page reaction to the readings. How does Goodlad's description of schools and social studies fit with your memories of school and with your own observations? To what extent did Goodlad observe active student engagement in worthwhile learning? To what extent did you experience active engagement in worthwhile learning when you were in high school or college? To what extent do you observe active student engagement in worthwhile knowledge in your current practicum?

(4) What is Social Studies For? / Feb 1

Readings: Barr, Barth, and Shermis "The Nature of Social Studies," 1-31; NCSS *Expectations of Excellence*, 3-16.

Assignment: Write a 4-5 page reaction articulating your thoughts on the nature and purpose of social studies. Demonstrate an understanding of the three traditions by indicating which tradition you think is best suited to achieve excellence as laid out by the NCSS.

(5) The Role of Democracy in Education / Feb 8

Readings: Stephen Thornton "The Social Studies Near Century's End: Reconsidering Patterns of Curriculum and Instruction," 223-254.

Assignment: Interview social studies teachers at your school about the purpose of social studies. More info TBA

(6) Realizing a Vision of Powerful and Authentic Social Studies / Feb 15

Readings: Robert Westbrook "Public Schooling and American Democracy," 125-150.

Assignments: TBA

(7) Realizing a Vision for Powerful and Authentic Social Studies, Part Two / Feb 22

Readings: Ronald Evans, "A Critical Approach to Teaching History," 132-141; Rethinking Schools: Agenda for Change, "Why Students Should Study History: An Interview with Howard Zinn," 89-99.

Assignments: TBA

(8) What's Worth Knowing? The Politics of Content / Mar 1

Readings: NCSS *Expectations of Excellence*, 155-177; Fred Newmann "Five Standards of Authentic Instruction."

Assignments: TBA

(9) What's Worth Knowing? The Politics of Content, Continued / Mar 8

Readings: Fred Newmann, "Linking Restructuring to Authentic Student Achievement"; Totten and Riley, "Authentic Pedagogy and the Holocaust: A Critical Review of State Sponsored Curricula."

Assignments: Reaction Paper TBA

SPRING BREAK, MARCH 13-17—NO CLASS MARCH 15

(10) What's Worth Knowing? A Critical Look at the Georgia Performance Standards for Social Studies / Mar 22

Readings: <http://www.georgiastandards.org/socialstudies.asp>; Fred Newmann, "Can Depth Replace Coverage in the High School Curriculum?"; "What Constrains Authentic Social Studies Instruction?"

Assignments: TBA

(11) A Continued Look at the GPS for Social Studies / Mar 29

Readings: James Loewen, 12-74, 271-318; Bill Bigelow, "Discovering Columbus: Rereading the Past," 61-68.

Assignment: TBA

(12) Multicultural Education and Social Studies, Power and Privilege / Apr 5

Readings: Rethinking Schools: An Agenda for Change, 7-22; Barbara Vaccar, "Moving Beyond Polite Correctness," 285-295; Sonia Nieto, "Moving Beyond Tolerance in Multicultural Education," 63-69; Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," 81-84.

Assignment: Reaction Paper TBA

(13) Multicultural Education, Social Studies, Power and Privilege / Apr 12

Readings: Walter Parker, 1-53; 76-100; 150-161.

Assignment: Reaction Paper TBA

(14) Democracy and Multicultural Education / Apr 19

Readings: John Taylor Gatto, "The Psychopathic School," 20-34.

Assignment: TBA

(15) Democracy and Multicultural Education / Apr 26

Readings: Joel Spring, 243-282; Linda McNeil, "Contradictions of Control."

Assignment: TBA