

ESOC 3420
Early Childhood Social Studies
Mondays, 1:25-4:25 pm
Room 417 Aderhold
Fall 2009

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Description and Goals:

This course provides an introduction to social studies instruction for young children, specifically PreK- 2nd grade. Topics will include the goals, content, and teaching methods of elementary social studies. The students in this course will:

- Examine how social studies has been taught traditionally
- Develop an understanding of issues that surface in ECSS instruction
- Examine methods of instruction used in ECSS
- Consider multiple perspectives and social studies content

Required Readings:

Readings for this course are included in a course packet at Bel-Jean, 163 East Broad Street, Athens, Georgia 30601. Please call ahead to make sure they have a packet ready for you (706.548.3648). It may not be available for purchase until the end of the week of August 17th. Remember to call ahead.

The course readings can also be downloaded from our course Learning Commons webpage (<http://elc.uga.edu/>). If you choose this option, please make sure you print out the readings and bring them to class.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and participation in class- 20%

Because the course only meets once per week, attendance is required at all class meetings. Class sessions will consist of group discussions and activities, so your presence is essential. That being said, I understand that illness and other emergencies occur. Please let me know in advance if you have to miss a class. If you miss more than 2 classes, your participation grade will be lowered. It is your responsibility to turn in any assignments that are due on the day of your absence and to find out what you missed during class.

Reflection papers- 20%

Some weeks you will write a brief reflection/reaction paper to the weekly readings. At the end of the paper you will include two questions raised by the readings. The papers should be 200-300 words in length. You should write substantive, analytic reflections and reactions that reveal your careful reading of the weekly texts. Good reflections:

- Refer to the text, often drawing on specific phrases, ideas, or quotes.
- Connect to other ideas, readings, experiences.
- Pose thoughtful questions, concerns, or challenges in response to texts.

Teacher interview/paper- 20%

You will choose an elementary teacher to interview regarding social studies instruction. After the interview, you will write a 3-4 page (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 pt. font) paper on the experience. There will be some class preparation prior to the interview. Further details will be discussed in class.

Class presentation/children's literature- 20%

You will work in groups of three and pick a lesson (and standard) to teach using children's literature. Your group will research literature to incorporate into your instruction. You will then present the books to the class as well as a one-page handout briefly summarizing the books and how they could be used in the elementary classroom.

Final project- 20%

At the end of the semester, you will write a rationale that explains what you believe should be the purpose, content, and method(s) of teaching social studies. The National Council for the Social Studies defines social studies as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.” This assignment will challenge you to unpack the meaning of this idea (and other ideas we will discuss over the semester) as you develop your own rationale for teaching social studies. The rationale will be approximately 8 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins).

Grading:

93-100=A	77-79=C+
90-92=A-	73-76=C
87-89=B+	70-72=C-
83-86=B	60-69=D
80-82=B-	

Academic Honesty:

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Written Work:

Both the content and the quality of your writing are important. I suggest reading aloud every assignment before handing it in and making sure that all your work is proofread carefully. All written work should be typed, double-spaced, carefully proofread, and free of grammatical and other technical errors. I take your usage of grammar and spelling into consideration when evaluating your work. When you are referencing the work of other authors, please cite them formally, using the conventions of APA or another established style.

Electronic Devices:

Please turn off all cell phones and all other communication devices prior to the start of class (except in the case of emergency). Laptop computers may be used to take notes in class, but not for e-mail, internet use, or other personal purposes during class time.

Notification of Teacher Research:

As a teacher researcher, I routinely collect, analyze, interpret, and report on data as it concerns my courses and teaching. This allows me to improve my teaching and add to the larger body of knowledge about teacher education instruction. Data collection methods such as observation, recording of class member exchanges, journal and field notes, samples of student work are all within the realm of access by me since they constitute accepted practice for better understanding teaching. If you do not want your work in this class to be a part of my research, please let me know. I will be available to answer any questions about any research that is being done in this class.

Equity and Accessibility:

If you have any special circumstances that you believe may affect your performance in class, please meet with me to make the necessary accommodations.

Course Schedule:

(The readings are to be completed prior to the class meeting.)

August 17: **Introductions**

SOCIAL STUDIES: PURPOSES AND POSSIBILITIES

August 24: **What is Social Studies?**

Readings:

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies pp. 9-15, 64-91 (page number at the bottom/center of the text)

Caution: When you print this article, make sure you only select the above page numbers ...you do not want to print out the entire report on the ELC website. It's **very long.*

August 31:

Readings:

The Social Studies Wars, Now and Then by Ronald W. Evans

The Nature of Social Studies by Robert Barr, James Barth, and S. Samuel Shermis

The Social Studies Curriculum: Purposes, Problems, Possibilities
ed. E. Wayne Ross

Sept. 7:

no class/ Labor Day

Sept. 14:

Readings:

What Does it Mean to Be Well Educated? By Alfie Kohn

Choices for Children: Why and How to Let Students Decide by Alfie Kohn (Foxfire)

Room to Grow by Michelle G. Zachlod (Foxfire)

What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy by Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne

*** Print out State Standards for your grade level and bring to class**

*** Reflection Paper Due**

DEMOCRACY

Sept. 21:

Readings:

Conditions of Democracy: Elementary Perspectives by Karon N. LeCompte

Using Classroom Space and Routine to Promote Democratic Opportunities by Lisa A. Gross

Activities for Strengthening the Meaning of Democracy for Elementary School Children
by Elizabeth Anne Yeager and Diane Yendol Silva

Sept. 28:

Readings:

Introducing Children to Democratic Government by Janet Alleman and Jere Brophy

(Pledging Allegiance) *Once Upon A Time When Patriotism Was What You Did* by Gloria Ladson-Billings

September 11: Seven Lessons for the Schools by Diane Ravitch

*** Reflection Paper Due**

Oct. 5: **Readings:**
A Democracy of Third Graders by Kathy Nalle

Teaching About Elections During a Presidential Election Year by Mary E. Haas, Barbara Hatcher, and Cynthia Szymanski Sunal

*** Teacher Interview Due**

CONTROVERSY AND CHALLENGES

Oct. 12: **Readings:**
How Do Teachers' Political Views Influence Teaching About Controversial Issues? by Diana E. Hess

Can Controversial Topics Be Taught in the Early Grades? The Answer is Yes! by Robin Haskell McBee

Bones of Contention: Teaching Controversial Issues by Elizabeth Hinde

A Counter-Intuitive Strategy: Reduce Student Stress by Teaching Current Events by Jeff Passe

Oct. 19: **Readings:**
Gender in Social Education by Jane Bernard-Powers

Social Studies and Feminism by Nel Noddings

Crafting a Culturally Relevant Social Studies Approach by Gloria Ladson-Billings

Elementary Students in Substantive Culture Learning by Merry M. Merryfield

*** Reflection Paper Due**

Oct. 26: **Readings:**
Planning and Teaching with Multiple Perspectives by Joyce H. Burstein and Lisa Hutton

(Rethinking Columbus) *Discovering Columbus: Re-reading the Past* by Bill Bigelow

Listening to Children Think Critically About Christopher Columbus by Mary Beth Henning, Jennifer L. Snow-Gerono, Diane Reed, and Amy Warner

Teachers Guide to Religion in the Public Schools (First Amendment Center)

*** Reflection Paper Due**

LITERATURE AND METHODS

- Nov. 2: Children's Literature
Readings:
Connecting Literacy with Social Studies Content by Margaret J. Johnson and Carole Janisch

Pairing Folktales with Textbooks and Nonfiction in Teaching About Culture by David C. Virtue and Kenneth E. Vogler

Advocating For Peace and Justice through Children's Literature by Junko Yokota and Jacqui Kolar

Notable Trade Books for Young People (NCSS)

*** Group Presentations: Children's Literature**
- Nov. 9: **Readings:**
Making and Playing Small Group Games: Practicing Collaboration While Mastering Content by Mary E. Hass and Margaret A. Laughlin

Creating a Museum of Family Artifacts by Judith Y. Singer and Alan J. Singer

Exploring World Cultures with Music by Mary Frances Erler

Earth's Population and Resources: Concepts for K-2 (Population Connection)

Google Earth: A Virtual Globe for Elementary Geography by Judy Britt and Gus LaFontaine

Developmentally Appropriate Geography by S. Kay Gandy
- Nov. 16: **Readings:**
Artifacts Bring Grover Cleveland's Presidency to Life for First Graders by Carol Macken

The Bear is Still Singing: Creating Lyrics with Social Studies by Thomas Turner

Rope Circles and Giant Trees: Making History Come Alive by Robert Millward

Connecting Children to a Bigger World: Reading Newspapers in the Second Grade by Sandra B. Oldendorf and Annie Calloway

Panwapa: Global Kids, Global Connections by Ilene R. Berson and Michael J. Berson
- Nov. 23: **no class/ Thanksgiving break**
- Nov. 30: *tba*
- Dec. 7: *** Final Project/Rationale Due**

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

