

# SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ESOC 4350

Fall 2009

Wednesdays, 2:00-4:45 pm, Aderhold 626

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*There is a great discovery, education is politics! When a teacher discovers that he or she is a politician too, the teacher has to ask, what kind of politics am I doing in the classroom? That is, in favor of whom am I being a teacher? The teacher works in favor of something and against something. Because of that, he or she will have another great question, how to be consistent in my teaching practice with my political choice?*

–Paulo Freire, *A Pedagogy for Liberation*, 1987

The purpose of this course is to help you prepare to teach secondary social studies and design appropriate curriculum that affords both cognitive and affective learning. Together with the companion methods course, ESOC 4360, and your field experience in ESOC 4450L, your work this semester should lay foundation for effective teaching.

According to Ochoa-Becker (2007), “democratic teaching requires teachers who are deeply committed to democratic principles and who see the development of informed, thoughtful and democratic decision makers as their most significant responsibility (p.216).” To promote democratically minded citizens, education must therefore provide tools necessary for individuals to deliberate and dialogue with one another about controversial issues in pursuit of solving common problems for the common good. As stressed by Engle (1960/1996), the curriculum “should emphasize decision making against mere remembering (p.117).” Once social studies classrooms are oriented around issues and problems, one can begin assembling the dialogical processes necessary to create democratic citizens. Nevertheless, these processes are only viable if teachers understand democracy, how it looks in society, and how it is implemented in schools. Therefore, this course focuses on a series of questions uniquely important to understanding how to design a social studies curriculum that encourages students to become active, democratic citizens.

## **Focus Questions**

1. What is democracy?
2. What social contexts help and hinder democracy’s implementation?
3. What does it mean to be a democratic person?
4. What are democratic values? How do these values play out in society and schools?
5. What are the purposes of public education? How do these purposes align with democracy and what it means to be a democratic person?
6. How does the social studies curriculum contribute to these public purposes of schooling? What should be the purpose of social studies?
7. What is democratic education? What does this “style” of education look like in schools?

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, participants should be able to...

### *Content and Curriculum*

- Demonstrate knowledge of content and modes of inquiry that are central to the subjects they teach (1b).
- Help student make interdisciplinary connections (1e).
- Interpret and create curriculum that reflects state, local, and national content standards (1f).

### *Learning Environments*

- Create an equitable and culturally responsive classroom (3a).
- Organize classroom experiences to promote active student engagement in the pursuit of worthwhile learning (3c).
- Motivate students by providing engaging learning experiences (3e).

### *Assessment*

- Employ different types of assessments based on knowledge of their characteristics, uses, and limitations to promote student growth (4a).
- Use pre-assessment data to develop and support appropriate student learning goals (4b).
- Implement assessments that match instructional goals (4c).
- Involve students in self-assessment to help them develop awareness of their strengths and needs as learners (4d).

### *Planning and Instruction*

- Articulate clear and defensible rationales for curricular and instructional decision-making (5a).
- Develop and implement short and long term instructional plans that progress coherently towards learning goals (5b).
- Value and engage in collaborative planning and instruction (5f).

### *Professionalism*

- Systematically reflect on their own practice to improve teaching and learning (6a).
- Engage in collaborative inquiry (6b).
- Learn from and contribute to professional organizations (6h).

## **UGA Academic Honesty Policy**

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. *UGA Student Honor Code I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.* All students agree to abide by the honor code when signing the application for admission to the University. A Culture of Honesty--UGA's Academic Honesty System's full version may 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, Old College, (706) 542-0432.

### Required Readings

You will need to purchase the following books:

Ochoa-Becker, A. (2007). *Democratic education for social studies: An issues centered decision making curriculum*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.

Hess, D. (2009). *Controversy in the classroom: The democratic power of discussion*. New York: Routledge.

These books are available online through websites such as amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

**Primis ESOC 4350 Reading Packet Coursebook. Available only at UGA Bookstore.**

*Other course readings will be provided on e Learning Commons (eLC). It is your responsibility to print these out and bring them to class on the day listed.*

**YOU MUST BRING THE READINGS TO CLASS WITH YOU EACH WEEK.**

### Assignments and Grading

#### **Teaching Rationale (10%)**

Because the program attempts to develop purpose driven teachers, I will electronically collect a copy of your teaching rationale (developed in ESOC 2450) on August 27<sup>th</sup>. It is expected, to obtain the full ten points that you schedule a meeting with me before September 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss how to move forward toward a rationale based teaching practice.

#### **Critical Summaries (20%)**

Based on the readings for the week, you are expected to prepare a critical summary (between 300 and 350 words) for each class meeting. These summaries should highlight key issues from the readings and you should make some sort of argument in relation to them. The goal is not to simply restate what the authors' say. At the end of the summary you are to conclude with "two burning questions" raised by the readings or the topic that week. Please use the archaic function of copy (ctrl-c) and paste (ctrl-v) when you submit your work on eLC into the submission box. **Critical summaries are due no later than 12:00 pm on the day of class, no exceptions.** The average score of your reaction papers will be used to compute your final Critical Summary grade.

#### **Attendance/Participation (10%)**

##### *Attendance*

This course assumes that regular attendance and appropriate participation/preparation reflects one's commitment to the material. Because we only meet once per week, attendance is necessary and expected. If, for a serious reason, you cannot attend a session, it is expected that you contact me as soon as possible (*preferably* in advance). **If attendance becomes a problem (more than two absences), your grade will begin to reflect a 10 percent decrease for each additional absence.**

##### *Participation*

Students' participation grade will reflect every facet of their manner of being throughout the entire course. In other words, participation in this course is not limited to what is said, or not said, during Wednesday class sessions. This class is largely discussion-based. Accordingly, every class member is expected to contribute to the conversation we will continue throughout the semester. Your participation in this course should reflect the same professional manner you should exhibit in the schools. That is, your manner should be responsible, open-minded, thoughtful, and earnest. These dispositions suggest far more than "just talking" in class or on-line, but speak instead to a type of engagement that includes

speaking, listening, critiquing and demonstrating concern for the learning of others in the class. Thus your responsibilities as a member of this class extend to more than simply making sure you meet the individual course requirements. You also have responsibilities to your colleagues in this class, so that we might come together as a community of educators working to better understand teaching and learning in social studies through mutual, supportive, and critical inquiry.

### **Discussion Groups/Talking Points (20%)**

During the term, groups of five will be asked to lead the seminar in meaningful, dialogic, and deliberative engagement with an assigned reading. However, I would like you to experiment with leading discussion as a participant/observer. In this class we will be covering six controversial public issues:

1. Does affirmative action advance racial equality?
2. Stopping illegal immigration: should border security come first?
3. Do Americans need national health insurance?
4. Should Americans adopt public financing of national campaigns?
5. Is warrantless wiretapping in some cases justified to protect national security?
6. Is the use of torture against terror suspects every justified?

As you prepare and conduct the class discussion, I would like you to take notes on the experience during the experience. After your group leads a discussion, please turn in an individual reflection **within twenty-four hours** on the experience of leading a collective discussion (**450 to 600 words using the “attachment” function on eLC**). With five of you leading a discussion there should be several opportunities where individually you will speak and other times where you will just observe other team members lead a discussion. Discuss and describe your observations, what/who did you look at, what did you think about, what was different from the position of leader and the position of observer? Did this discussion accomplish your goals, why or why not? What was the ebb and flow of discussion like from “the other side of the desk?” What does this experience tell you about the work of teaching and leading a discussion?

In order to engage the entire class in the topic for the week, I have split the class into two groups and each of these groups will be alternating positions (yes/no) every week:

#### GROUP 1

Affirmative Action  
Illegal Immigration  
Health Insurance

#### GROUP 2

Public Financing  
Wiretapping  
Torture

As a member of each of these position groups it is your responsibility to read your side of the issue (in your reading packet) for each of the six weeks we will be engaged in deliberative discussions, and pull a quote (or series of quotes) and write a paragraph explaining how this quote fortifies your group’s position. You must submit this quote pull **forty-eight hours** before class to the lead subgroup (indicated in parenthesis below) and they will compile and redistribute a talking points memo to your position group at least **twenty-four** hours before the lead group will discuss the topic in class. Use the eLC mail function to send and receive e-mails.

### **Revisiting the Rationale (15%)**

It is the intent of this course to both challenge and affirm many of the concepts, ideas, and notions about social studies education that you initially encountered when you developed your rationale in 2450. For this end of the term assignment, I would like you to revisit your rationale in tandem with the contents of your course assignments to date. Based upon this reading, assess your development as a social studies teacher overall (you are free to include a reflection based on this course, another course in the

methods/curriculum/practicum block, or program in general) in a two to three page paper. Answer all or several of the following questions in your revisit:

- Are you pleased with what you have accomplished this semester?
- Any disappointments?
- Has your resolve to become a social studies teacher strengthened or weakened? Why?
- Has your view of yourself as a social studies teacher changed during the course of the semester? If so, what has prompted this change? If not, why not?
- Are you on track for becoming the kind of social studies teacher you imagine yourself capable of becoming?

(adopted from Bullough & Gitlin, 2001, *Becoming a student of teaching*)

In addition to this reflection piece, I would like you to revisit the rationale you turned in at the beginning of the semester. Using the comment feature on Microsoft Word (if you are unfamiliar with this tool, I'll provide some free tech support), survey your rationale for phrases, ideas, or concepts, that have been changed, reaffirmed, or can be considered in a new light after your experience in the MCP block. Attach a printed copy of the rationale with comments to your revisit paper. You are responsible for providing at least two substantial comments per every page of text (by substantial I mean more than "yes, I still agree" and less than *Moby Dick*).

### **Curriculum Unit Plan (25%)**

The culminating project for the course will be construction and presentation of a plan that details a unit of study in social studies that you might use in your classroom. You will turn in a single unit plan to me and your methods instructor (this is a shared project); however, the criteria your instructors use to assess your work will be different reflecting individual course goals and objectives. Details will be provided in class.

### ***Grading***

The critical summaries will be graded using: full credit (100), partial credit (60), or no credit (0).

### ***UGA Grade Policy***

All other assignment and your final grade will follow the UGA Grade Policy:

A =	100-95%	C+ =	79-77%
A- =	94-90%	C =	76-74%
B+ =	89-87%	C- =	73-70%
B =	86-84%	D =	69-60%
B- =	83-80%	F =	59-0

### **Electronic Devices**

Please keep all cell phones on silent during the class session. Laptop computers may only be used in class during the break or instances where eLC, the internet, or Word documents are needed.

### **Classroom Research Notification**

As a teacher researcher, the instructor routinely collects, analyzes, interprets and reports on data as it concerns his courses. This allows him to improve the way he teaches as well as to add to the body of knowledge about teacher education pedagogy. Data collection methods such as observation, recording of class member exchanges, teacher-initiated journals and field notes, samples of student work are all within the realm of access by the teacher for research purposes, since they constitute accepted practice for understanding about teaching. Any student who prefers that their work in this class not be considered for purposes of research should indicate so in writing to the instructor, who is available and willing to answer all questions about the research.



## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **August 19: Course Introduction**

- Syllabus
- Meet eLC

### **August 26: Situating American Society and the Social Studies Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 1
- Schedule a Teaching Rationale Meeting before September 23

Brownstein, R. (2007). America Divided. In *The second civil war* (pp. 9-26). New York: Penguin Press.

Ross, E.W. (2006). The struggle for the social studies curriculum. In *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities* (pp. 17-37). New York: SUNY Press.

Thornton, S.J. (2008). Continuity and change in social studies curriculum. In L.S. Levstik & C.A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 15-32). New York: Routledge.

### **September 2: Why Deliberative Democracy?**

- Critical Summary 2

Gutmann, A. & Thompson, D. (2004). *Why deliberative democracy?* Princeton: Princeton University Press (pp. 1-29)

Parker, W.C. (2006). Public discourses in schools: Purposes, problems, and possibilities. *Educational Researcher*, 35(8), 11-18.

### **September 9: Why Deliberative Democracy?**

- Critical Summary 3

Gutmann, A. & Thompson, D. (2004). *Why deliberative democracy?* Princeton: Princeton University Press (pp. 29-63)

Westheimer, J. & Kahne, J. (2006). Teaching democracy: What schools need to do. In *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities* (pp. 297-318). New York: Routledge.

### **September 16: The Case for Controversial Political Issues**

- Critical Summary 4

Hess, Chapter 1- Why Democracy Demands Controversy

Hess, Chapter 2- Rationales for Controversial Issues Discussions in Schools

Hess, Chapter 3- Defining Controversial Issues

### **September 23: Inside Classrooms**

- Critical Summary 5

Hess, Chapter 4- Skillful Teaching of Controversial Issues Discussion

Hess, Chapter 5- Diversity in Our Midst: Ideological Diversity in Classrooms

Hess, Chapter 6- To Disclose or Not to Disclose: A Controversial Choice for Teachers

### **September 30: Controversy in the Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 6

Hess, Chapter 7- Teaching in the Tip: Controversies About What is Legitimately Controversial

Hess, Chapter 8- September 11: "The Ultimate Teachable Moment"

Harris, D.E. (2002). Classroom assessment of civic discourse. In W. Parker (Ed). *Education for democracy*. Greenwich: Information Age Press.

Issue 1: Does Affirmative Action Advance Racial Equality?

GROUP 1: Yes (Health Insurance)

GROUP 2: No (Public Financing)

### **October 7: History Education and Democratic Education**

- Critical Summary 7

Barton, K. & Levstik, L. (2004). Humanities and participatory citizenship In *Teaching history for the common good*. (pp. 25-44). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Whelan, M. (2006). Teaching history: A constructivist approach. In E.W. Ross, *The social studies curriculum: Purposes, problems, and possibilities*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Issue 2: Stopping Illegal Immigration: Should Border Security Come First?

Group 1: No (Affirmative Action)

Group 2: Yes (Wiretapping)

### **October 14: Democratic Ideals-Implications for the Social Studies Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 8

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 1- Democratic Ideals: Implications for Social Studies Curricula

Parker, W.C. (in press). Talking to strangers. *Teachers College Record*

Issue 3: Do We Need National Health Insurance?

Group 1: Yes (Immigration)

Group 2: No (Torture)

**October 21: Socialization/Decision Making for Democracy**

- Critical Summary 9
- Issue 4 Discussion

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 3- Socialization and Counter Socialization for a Democracy

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 4- The Social Sciences and the Humanities in Citizenship Education

Issue 4: Should American Adopt Public Financing of Campaigns?

Group 1: No (Health Insurance)

Group 2: Yes (Torture)

**October 28: Decision Making in the Social Studies Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 10
- Group 5 Discussion

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 5- Democratic Decision Making in an Issues-Centered Curriculum

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 6- The Status of Social Studies Programs

Issue 5: Is Warrantless Wiretapping in Some Cases Justified to Protect National Security?

Group 1: Yes (Affirmative Action)

Group 2: No (Public Financing)

**November 4: Democratic Teaching Practices**

- Critical Summary 11
- Group 3 Discussion

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 7- The Framework of the Curriculum

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 8- Democratic Teaching Practices

Issue 6: Is the Use of Torture Against Terrorist Suspects Ever Justified?

GROUP 1: No (Immigration)

GROUP 2: Yes (Wiretapping)

**November 11: No Class NCSS/CUFA**

**November 18: Assessment and Implementation of Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 12
- Curriculum Workshop

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 9- Assessment for an Issues-Centered Decision Making Curriculum

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 10- Implementation at School and Classroom Levels

**November 25**

**NO CLASS-Thanksgiving Holiday**

**December 2: Remaking the Curriculum**

- Critical Summary 13
- "Revisiting the Rationale" (Hard Copy)

Hess, Chapter 9- Creating More Controversy in Classrooms

Ochoa-Becker, Chapter 11- Conditions Needed for an Issues-Centered Curriculum

Ross, E.W., (2006). Remaking the social studies curriculum In *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities* (pp. 319-332). New York: SUNY Press.

**Tuesday, December 14: CURRICULUM UNIT PLAN DUE**

**Hard copy in my box (629F) before 5:00 pm**