

## ESOC 4360: Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Secondary Schools

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Mondays 1:25 – 4:25  
626 Aderhold Hall

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### Course Description

ESOC 4360 is designed to provide pre-service teachers with an introduction to the process of pedagogical decision-making in social studies. This includes (but is not limited to) teaching methods (pedagogies) for specific social studies courses, assessment, classroom management, and purposeful social studies teaching. Together with ESOC 4350 and 4450L this course will examine rationale-based social studies teaching and learning designed to promote active student engagement in worthwhile learning. This course will focus primarily on the pedagogical decisions social studies teachers make as part of teaching the various content areas that make up the social studies curriculum. Students will develop more than just a cursory understanding of possible methods for teaching social studies. The goal is not to simply fill up a “bag of tricks” for teaching social studies. Instead, these courses are structured to examine the connection between content and pedagogy, the role of rationale-based practice in guiding your content and pedagogical decision-making, the impact of state and national standards on social studies teaching and learning, and the relationship between social studies and democracy.

### Major Topics for Discussion:

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy  
Creating Deliberative Classrooms  
Cooperative Learning  
Education through Democracy  
Assessment

Connecting with Parents  
Collaboration with Colleagues  
State and National Standards (NCLB/ GPS)  
Certification and Job Applications (WebCT)  
Lesson Planning

Classroom Management  
Teaching Economics, History, Civics, Geography  
Decision Making  
Developing Participatory Citizenship Skills  
Connecting Community and Classroom / Service Learning

As a *seminar*, this class is largely a discussion-based class. Although the instructor will set the agenda for most class meetings, your school experiences, your interpretations of what is happening in the schools, and your questions will provide much of the substance of the course. For this reason, you share the responsibility with others in this class to make our time together educative. 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, 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.

### Core Themes

In the secondary social studies education program, the exploration of teaching and learning in social studies draws heavily on your experiences in secondary classroom field experiences. We also draw on several core themes, or sets of ideas, 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. These themes will be referenced in assignments and discussion, so you are encouraged to develop a working familiarity with them early in the semester.

- ✓ Four Part Framework-- The four parts of this framework can be thought of as a checklist of what a teacher education should help you develop.

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

Part Two An understanding of what you would do in schools to make the mission of Part One happen.

Part Three A critical awareness of the obstacles you are likely to encounter as you attempt to carry out the stuff of Part Two to make the mission of Part One happen.

Part Four Ideas about how you will persist, given the obstacles of Part Three, as you attempt to carry out the stuff of Part Two to make the mission of Part One happen.

- ✓ Rationale-Based Practice-- The idea of rationale-based practice is pretty straight forward. Decisions about what and how to teach, and about how you carry out your role as a social studies teacher, ought to be based in an understanding of what you hope to accomplish as a social studies teacher (your rationale). Rationales not only address what you do in your school, but also how your work relates to the broader social conditions of schooling, and the contributions your work makes to the larger society. The idea is easier said than done.

- ✓ Reflective Teaching-- Reflective teaching is a stance, or approach, to teaching as much as it is something you do. Reflective teaching means you are mindful and aware of the complexity of teaching. Reflective teaching is the disposition to ask important questions of your practice. Not all questions are created equal. More than finding some answers to the problems of teaching and learning in social studies, this course aims for you to leave this program asking the right questions.

- ✓ Good Teaching Definition-- Good teaching is defined in this course as teaching that leads to active student engagement in worthwhile learning. Obviously the two important concepts here are “active student engagement” and “worthwhile learning.” It is crucial to your success in this course that you develop your understanding of the meaning of these two concepts.

- ✓ GSTEP Framework Standards-- The Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program has produced a Framework of six standards that account for the essential competencies of *exemplary* teachers. The six standard, 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. They also structure the body of the eportfolio assignment for this course.

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

## **Activities, Assignments, Grading, and Grade Scale**

### Reaction Papers

Reading and writing assignments, known as Reaction Papers, will make up a large portion of your written work for the semester. There are 10 scheduled reaction papers. Reaction papers are more than just your reflections. They should demonstrate your attempts to interact with the text, to critique concepts, to expand upon the implications (or lack thereof) the readings have on your rationale and developing conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning. See the attached description of reaction papers for a more detailed discussing of the nature and purpose of reaction papers. These papers account for 50% of the final grade.

### Methods Presentations

Since this is a methods course we will spend time during the majority of our course meetings experiencing, discussing, and critiquing specific examples of social studies methods/pedagogy designed to promote active student engagement in worthwhile learning. Students will prepare and present a thirty-minute lesson demonstrating the merits of particular teaching methods (there will be a list of potential methods but you may choose to work “off the list”) which connect to your developing teaching rationales. This will allow each student the chance to experience leading the class and to allow students to develop a set of social studies methods/pedagogies. Methods presentations will account for 10% of your final grade.

### Social Studies Rationale

Throughout the semester we will be discussing your developing rationale. A rationale explains what you believe should be the purpose, content, and methods of teaching social studies. Rationales are always a work in progress for reflective teachers. The rationale you wrote in ESOC 2450 was an initial statement of your beliefs about teaching and learning in social studies. We will begin with your initial rationale as part of our discussion of social studies methods. An initial draft of your updated rationale will be due after the fourth week of class. A second draft will be due after the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester and a final draft will be due at the end of the semester. Only the final draft will count as part of your course grade. The rationale counts for 25% of the final grade.

### Class Participation Attendance and Participation

This course is based on the 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 there are any occasions in which you will not be able to meet these expectations. Participation is expected in seminar meetings and via a minimum of ten postings to class WebCT discussions. The attendance and participation grade will be determined at the end of the semester based on an assessment of the frequency, nature, and quality of your contributions to the course. This requirement accounts for 15% of the final grade.

### Grade Scale:

100--94 A, 93-90 A -, 89-87 B+, 86-84 B, 83-80 B, 79-77 C+, 76-74 C, 73-70 C-, 69-67 D+, 66-64 D, 63-60 D-, ,59-0 F.

### **Academic Honesty:**

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 has been developed to serve these goals. All members of the academic community are responsible for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty. All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about

those standards before performing any academic work. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. Please visit the website of the Office of the President for Instruction and familiarize yourself with these policies.  
[http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty/academic\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm)

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