George Mason University
Graduate School of Education

EDUC 537-002
Foundations of Multicultural Education

Spring 2005

“No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive.”
Mahatma Gandhi (Harijan, May 9, 1936)

Instructor EDUC 537-002: Christine Koenig

Class Day and Time: Monday 4:30 PM – 7:10 PM
January 24, 2005– May 2, 2005

Class Location: West 261

Contact Information: christine.koenig@fcps.edu
Home phone: (703)249-0050

Office: I do not have an office on campus but I am more than happy to confer by phone and email.

Course Description:

EDUC 537 examines multicultural education by focusing on the historical, sociological, and philosophical foundations of education and includes an overview of multicultural/multilingual curricula with a special focus on culturally/inguistically-responsive instruction and assessment techniques.

Course Delivery:

Course delivery is accomplished in a combination of ways in order to meet the needs of all learners and learning styles. Methods of instruction include:

• Presentations (instructor-lead discussions)
• Discussions (active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that provoke critical thinking and verbal interaction)
• Cooperative learning (small group structure emphasizing learning from and with others)
• Guest lecturers
• Student presentations
• Video presentations

The seminar format of EDUC 537 requires the active participation of all students. As an experiential course, it is structured around discussion and small group activities. Therefore, it is critical that all students keep up with the readings and actively participate in class. Students should be prepared to discuss the course readings in relation to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students in grades PK–12.

**Students with Special Needs:**

If you have a disability that affects your ability to participate fully in the course or you require special accommodations, you are encouraged to inform the instructor in order to ensure your successful participation in this course.

**Required Texts:**


**Recommended Books:**


**A. Course Requirements:**

25 Percent of Grade

- **Weekly Reading:** Reading assignments are outlined in the Course Schedule.

- **Weekly Writing:** Writing assignments are outlined in the Course Schedule. In addition to major assignments, students will be asked to write short reaction statements to issues raised in class. These reaction statements will be based on required readings, issues raised
in class discussions, and themes found in video presentations. These will be shared with the group in small and large group discussions.

- **Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate actively in every session by critically analyzing, asking questions, and making observations about the readings, thereby indicating they have thoroughly prepared for the class. Class meets once a week for three hours a week.

### 25 Percent of Grade

- **Reflective Personal Development Paper:** This paper discusses your personal beliefs and principles regarding teaching in America’s increasingly diverse and heterogeneous classrooms and schools. See pink pages for details.  
  **Due March 7**

### 15 Percent of Grade

- **Field Experience:** Students spend 10 hours observing culturally appropriate teaching practices, assisting students in the classroom, and interacting with cooperating teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students of all backgrounds. Observations take place in schools in the Northern Virginia area. See yellow pages for details.  
  **Due April 25**

### 35 Percent of Grade

- **Cultural Project:** This is a group activity. Each student will interview a student from a racial, linguistic, and cultural background different from their own. Group members will work together to analyze, compare, and present observations and conclusions. See blue pages for details.  
  **Presentations: May 9**

Students should complete all assignments on time. They should be aware that points might be taken off assignments that are submitted past deadline, unless special arrangements have been made with the instructor in advance. Let’s keep the lines of communication open. I am more than happy to be flexible!
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 24th</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductions, Overview of Syllabus, Introduction to Kugler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Read Kugler, Part 1 (pages 3-44)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31st</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion of Kugler, Part 1 (pages 3-44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video: Fear and Learning at Hoover Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Read Kugler, Part 2 (pages 47-79)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7th</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Discussion of Kugler, Part 2 (pages 47-79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video: Pre-School in Three Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Read Kugler, Part 3 (pages 83-156)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14th</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussion of Kugler, Part 3 (pages 83-156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video: The Story of Qui Juo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Prepare questions for Eileen Kugler</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21st</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Eileen Kugler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Read Sleeter &amp; Grant, Chapter 1</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28th</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Discussion of Sleeter &amp; Grant, Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Reflective Personal Development Paper</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7th</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Due: Reflective Personal Development Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video: Richard Rodriguez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Sleeter &amp; Grant, Chapter 2</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21st</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Discussion of Sleeter &amp; Grant, Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Video: Failing in Fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>For Next Week: Sleeter &amp; Grant, Chapter 3</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Topic and Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| March 28th | 9   | Discussion of Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 3  
                        VideoSeries: Matters of Race  
                        For Next Week: Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 4 |
| April 4th  | 10  | Discussion of Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 4  
                        Video Series: Matters of Race  
                        For Next Week: Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 5 |
| April 11th | 11  | Discussion of Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 5  
                        Video Series: Matters of Race  
                        For Next Week: Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 6 |
| April 18th | 12  | Discussion of Sleeter & Grant, Chapter 6  
                        Video Series: Matters of Race  
                        For Next Week: Complete Field Experience |
| April 25th | 13  | Due: Field Experience  
                        Work with your group to pull together your cultural project.  
                        For Next Week: Complete Cultural Project |
| May 2nd    | 14  | Due: Presentation of Cultural Projects |
Reflective Personal Development Paper

Objective of Individual Reflective Paper:

The purpose of this written assignment is to provide an opportunity to explore “who you are” as it relates to your potential as a future educator in America’s increasingly diverse and heterogeneous classrooms.

It will challenge you to reflect on events and life experiences that have shaped your cultural premises, and will also help you share your reflections in class and in your groups so that cultural diversity among you may be discovered in a natural way.

It will also help you learn, understand, and use the major concepts, theories, and research related to the nature and structure of culture to construct learning environments that support culturally and linguistically diverse students' development and content area achievement.

Overall theme:
Personal beliefs and principles will have an impact on our teaching experiences in America’s increasingly diverse and heterogeneous classrooms and schools.

Project Objective
To critically explore and actively engage your self-identity, cultural assumptions, and life experiences.

Scope

Brainstorm upon your own PK-16 educational background, experiences, and environments from a multicultural and diverse viewpoint.

Write a five to ten page paper [double-space, APA style] recapturing your recollections and emphasizing your experiences with cultural diversity as a student in elementary, secondary, and higher education.

Some suggested questions you may want to ask yourself are:

1) Ethnic background – Who are my “ancestors” / “people”?

2) Upbringing – Where was I raised? How might I describe my socioeconomic class? What language(s) did / do I speak? How does this affect my culture?

3) Religion – How does my religion (or belief system) influence my culture?
4) Schooling – Where did I go to school? How did the culture of my school affect my teen years?

5) Experience with diversity – What experiences have I had with other ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic classes, environments, languages?

6) What fears, prejudices, and stereotypes was I raised with? Effects?

7) Where is my life/career headed in the near future? Distant future?

**Suggested Format**

A. Introduction

B. Life Experience
   
   Family background
   Cultural Experiences
   Childhood
   Adolescence
   Adulthood

C. Impact on Teaching
   
   Personal Impact
   Professional Impact/Educational Strategies
   How are you planning to apply knowledge to teaching situations at PK-12 schools?

D. Summary
   
   What have you learned for this experience/assignment?
   Has your awareness changed?
   What is your current thinking on the issues of culture, diversity, multiculturalism?
   What will you take with you?
Field experience is a required part of EDUC 537. Field experience consists of observing culturally appropriate / responsive teaching practices, interviewing teachers in the classroom, and possibly tutoring small groups of participants. Following this, students will prepare a written report assessing the teacher’s techniques. The paper will also provide a synthesis of theory.

Observations are conducted in the school of your choice. Many students are able to locate a school and set up a time to observe. If you need help, please see me.

If you are an in-service teacher, the field experience may be completed in your own classroom. You would need to reflect upon your own practice.

Your field experience may be conducted in the same classroom / school where a classmate is observing as long as your reports are completed independently.

A benefit of this field experience is that you will have an opportunity to visit, observe, and assist educators teaching real culturally and linguistically diverse students before you teach your own students. It also helps focus the course because it presents real-world teaching in diverse environments.

Suggested Format

Following is a suggested format for your paper. These are merely suggestions. Oftentimes students devise their own wonderful approach! You are free to find a way that best suits your style.

Section I: Introduction

Begin your report with a short introduction about the school in which you observed / participated. Include such details as demographics, population, location, and overall tone of the building. Some of this data should be available on the school's web site or in the front office.

Section II: Observations

The observation visit(s) are intended for the participant to get his / her "feet wet" in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom. The following guide questions
may serve to target your observation notes. Your written report should 
synthesize the information gathered. You need not cover all the topics listed. 
They are guides for your observation notes.

- Variety of activities
- Seating arrangement (rows, cooperative groups…)
- Daily routine
- How teacher implements multiple learning styles into lesson plans and 
  reacts to faster / slower students
- Percentage of time devoted to 4 skills (reading, writing, listening, 
  speaking) and the 5th skill of thinking
- Ability grouping?
- Homework
- Amount of L1 and L2 used by students
- Use of daily lesson plan - objectives and implementation
- Use of visuals and / or technology
- Use of textbooks
- Classroom appearance
- Effect of having multiple languages in class
- Classroom management
- Activating prior knowledge?
- Adaptation to different learning styles?
- How was the lesson introduced / wrapped up?
- Teacher / student interactions?
- Student / student interactions?
- Incorporation of student’s culture and / or language?
- Technology / manipulatives?

Some observation time should be spent engaging in classroom interaction with 
the teacher and students. This should be an interactive experience for you, not 
passive. Ask the teacher how you can be of assistance. Stress that you’d like to 
work with a group of students or help facilitate in some way.

Section III: Teacher Interviews

Please interview the teacher. This needn’t be a formal interview (no need for 
taping). The interview may not last long, as the teacher may be tight on time. A 
reasonable length is perhaps 10-15 minutes. This time is part of your total 10 
hours.

Following are some possible questions. These are merely suggestions and you 
are free to devise your own list.

- How do you examine the methods, practices, curriculum and 
  materials used in instruction, counseling, and student assessment to
determine whether every single one of your students is being included in the learning process?

• How do you aim for an inclusive curriculum?
• What are your general goals for your students? What skills and knowledge do you want them to develop? Are you following a standard curriculum for English language development that contains goals and objectives?
• How do you emphasize the importance of considering different approaches and viewpoints that encourage your students to evaluate their own beliefs?
• How do you like to present new material? What types of classroom activities do you prefer?
• How do you see your role in class? (In terms of a continuum between teacher-centered on one end, and student-centered on the other.)
• How do you see the role of students? How much responsibility do you give your students? Do you expect the same responsibility from each one?
• Do your students' socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds affect your teaching methods? (If yes): In what ways?
• How would you describe the demographics of your class (grade, size, cultural heritage, linguistic background, socio-economic diversity?)
• What types of SLA strategies do you use with ELL students?
• What materials and assessment strategies will you use?

Section IV: Reflections/Conclusions

This final section provides the opportunity for you to draw together theory and practice by reflecting on your observations, interviews, and interactions. You should comment on how the information gleaned applies to diversity issues and practices we have examined and discussed in this course. As you think and write about these school-based activities, you should refer to the course readings and discussions.

Conclude with a brief commentary about how this experience will affect your future teaching.

Please Remember: You are a guest at your field experience school. Appropriate attire and conduct are important, and professional courtesy is always essential.

Field Experience Hours and Report due on April 25th
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education

FIELD EXPERIENCE REPORTING FORM

Name: 

Semester/Yr: Spring 2005

School:

Course: EDUC 537

Title: Foundations of Multicultural Education

Professor: Christine Koenig

Minimum Clock hours: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Date / Time</th>
<th>Teacher Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use this form to keep track of your required 10-hours of field observations.

Return this form when you submit your written report.

Report and Hours -- Due April 25th
Background
Sonia Nieto, in her classic 1994 study Lessons from Students on Creating a Chance to Dream [Harvard Educational Review, 64(4), 392-426] calls for the inclusion of student voices as schools seek to reform curriculum to be relevant to all members of the school community. Nieto included interviews with students from many cultures exploring how included the students felt in their school communities.

An important overall theme was that curricula in many American schools were perceived by these students as being irrelevant to their lives and experiences. As a result, these students became disengaged from their school.

Based on her findings, Nieto suggested that educators need to examine the "hidden curriculum" reflected in bulletin boards, extracurricular activities, and other messages given to students about their abilities and talents. She also commented that practices such as tracking can be problematic, and that teachers should carefully reflect and consider which practices work well with the cultures of the students they teach. Nieto specifically mentions group work as a technique that serves many students from minority cultures. In the chapter, Nieto asserts in many ways that a monocultural education disempowers students.

Overview
What are secondary school [i.e., middle and high school] students saying about what constitutes a good education?

This is a performance-based assessment task. Each group of approximately four students will gather data on four secondary-school students and their parents or guardians from a variety of multicultural backgrounds. This assignment requires each graduate student to engage in a constructive dialogue with one secondary-school student and her or his family/guardian from a cultural background different from the interviewer. You will learn about their lives, backgrounds, and dreams with a particular emphasis on their experiences with the American educational system.

The ultimate goal is for group members to find and recommend culturally appropriate classroom/school applications. Based on their research findings, group members should reflect on alternative ways for educators to embrace their students' cultures and bring them into classroom lessons and activities so that learning can
be made relevant to students’ lives while at the same time guaranteeing that each student feels validated, affirmed, and included in their community of learners.

Secondary-school students and their families should be selected:

- Because of their ethnic origin;
- Because of their first and second language development, socio-economic status, family’s academic and religious background, length of residence in the US;
- Because of other criteria including ethnic identity, cultural maintenance, self-identification, and citizenship/migratory status (e.g., U.S.-born, diplomat, political refugee, resident-alien).

In an effort to break through the affective social filter and to gain a better understanding of the student’s family context, when and if possible, it is advised to conduct these interviews in the student’s house and to try to include the parents/guardians and siblings in the dialogue as well.

This project is appropriate for all EDUC 537 students, whether currently teaching or not. It requires no prior knowledge of action research methodology. Many of our culturally and linguistically diverse students used to belong to another “world” and are eager to share with their American educators the things from their culture that they still treasure.

Group members will listen to secondary school student voices in order to engage and become familiar with the family, community, and developmental characteristics of a student from a different background or culture from one’s own. This knowledge will be applied to an instructional setting.

Group members will meet to listen, analyze, examine, and compare secondary school students’ views on their educational experiences, particularly on the types of teachers and pedagogical practices that they perceived to be most beneficial to their achievement and success in school.

The project’s main purpose is to illuminate the educational experiences of culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse students from the perspective of the students themselves. More specifically, our purpose is to (1) document students’ perceptions of their school experiences; and (2) compare and contrast those perceptions with those of other students as well as of their teachers.

The purpose of the group presentation component of this project is two-fold:

1) To provide students the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in a learning/professional community on a topic of professional interest (student diversity) to the 21st century classroom teacher,
2) To provide students the opportunity to acquire and hone presentation skills and to share professional knowledge and language analysis skills with colleagues and fellow students.

**Helpful Steps for Conducting the Project**

**Step 1:**
Each group will develop interview questions to guide their interviews. These are sets of organized, open-ended questions that are used to guide the interview process. The questions are tools to prepare the interview and to keep the interview flowing in a conversational format.
- Demographic/background information
- Education ("Tell me about your formal education. Where did you attend school?)
- Religion
- Mentors & Tutors
- Childrearing practices and parental characteristics
- Physical characteristics of the home
- School characteristics
- Community characteristics
- Peer relations
- Health
- Identity issues

**Step 2:**
Each group member will interview a secondary school student from a racial, linguistic, or socioeconomic background with which they are not familiar. Students may audio or videotape the sample. It is helpful to select a student while you are doing your field experience.

You will need to gain appropriate permission.

Find out about the cultural, educational, linguistic background of the person you are interviewing. Be sure to identify the participant by asking the usual who-what-when-where-why questions.

**Step 3:**
Groups will meet, exchange interview data, and compare cross-cultural experiences of each of its members. Groups will highlight lessons learned.

**Step 4: Group Writing**
Groups will prepare a written report of their project. Only one project report per group is necessary. The paper is coauthored by all group members and is 15-20 pages in length. The last section (appendix) of the report will include a personal written reflection written by individual group members (not part of the 15-20
This appendix includes the students’ own thoughts and assessment of the experience, a reflection on the process, and its implications for teaching.

**Step 5: Group Presentation**
Groups will share their project with their classmates during the last evening of class. Each group is allotted 20-30 minutes of presentation time. Some groups use Power Point and others rely on handouts and/or posters. The presentation style is the decision of each group.

**Suggested Format for Final Written Report**

**Part I:**
Brief Introduction
Introduction of Participant
- Age
- Place of birth
- Countries / cities where he/she has lived
- Age when immigrated
- Social, educational, and personal background
- Academic history in the U.S. or overseas
- Linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural competencies

Criteria for choosing the participant
Setting in which the dialogue took place

**Part II:**
Discuss your group’s findings. Interpret your research findings and link/relate them to multicultural/multilingual theory and research.

When citing these course readings, please follow the guidelines of APA style (5th edition).

**Part III:**
Conclusion(s) and application. Describe how you would apply the results of your study to teacher-training as well as to classroom practice.

*Parts 1-3 comprise the 15-20 page requirement. The appendix is additional.*

**Part IV: Appendix: Personal Reflections/Connections**
Each group member should reflect about what they have learned through the process of the project as well as through working collaboratively with colleagues. How might you as a teacher working in a multicultural/multilingual environment use this process in the future?