

George Mason University
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
UTEEM- Early Childhood Program

**Frameworks for Unified Transformative Early Care and Education:
Developing a Unified Perspective**
EDUT 781
Spring 2005
Thursdays 4:30PM-7:10 PM
116 Thompson Hall

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Office Hours: Before, after
class, and by appointment

Course Purpose and Relationship to Program:

This course is offered as an advanced master's course in the UTEEM Early Childhood Teacher Training program that prepares teachers to work with culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families in a variety of inclusive school and community settings. This course is offered in conjunction with the seminar related to public policy and its effects on diverse young learners. Both courses are also linked to a full-time advanced internship. Students participating in this course are enrolled full time in the UTEEM program.

Course Description and Format:

This course is a capstone experience in the UTEEM program. It provides students with the opportunity to analyze foundational texts that contribute to the creation of a unified perspective framework that will guide their work with culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young learners, birth to age eight, and their families. Students will examine foundational work from the separate fields of early childhood education, early childhood special education, multicultural education, second language acquisition/bilingual education, and from a social justice perspective. They will analyze these foundational works to develop a formal position statement of guiding principles for their work with diverse children and families. The guiding principles paper, incorporating theory, research, and practice examples, serves as one of the program's culminating assignments, completed in lieu of a comprehensive exam, and will be presented in class at the end of the semester. In addition, UTEEM students enrolled will compile a portfolio documenting their learning process in the program. The portfolio will be presented to program faculty at the end of the semester.

The course is structured as a seminar. In small groups, students will take seminar leadership roles. In their leadership roles, the students will facilitate learning experiences for their peers that will contribute to their understanding of key theoretical readings and their applicability to practice, and their role as early childhood advocates and leaders.

Relationship to State and National Standards:

UTEEM courses are designed to meet licensure standards of the Commonwealth of Virginia in the areas of Early Childhood Special Education (birth to age five), Early Childhood Education (Pre-K to Grade Three), and English as a Second Language (Pre-K to Twelve). In addition they meet the accreditation standards for programs preparing teachers that have been established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Specific standards addressed by this course:

Virginia Standards:

1. The ability to analyze, evaluate and apply, quantitative and qualitative research;
2. Understanding the knowledge of skills and processes of history and the social science disciplines, as defined in the Virginia Standards of Learning, and how the standards provide the necessary foundation for teaching history and social science;
3. The historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development and organization of public education in the United States;
4. Historical perspectives of special education;
5. Knowledge of the effects of socio-cultural variables in the instructional setting;
6. Understanding of and proficiency in grammar, usage, and mechanics and their integration in writing;

NAEYC/DEC NCATE Standards

7. Reflect on practices, articulate a philosophy and rationale for decisions;
8. Demonstrate an understanding of conditions of children, families, and professionals;
9. Demonstrate an understanding of the early childhood profession;
10. Actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally by locating and using appropriate professional literature;
11. Analyze and evaluate field experience;
12. Apply theories of child development, both typical and atypical, and apply current research;
13. Apply knowledge of cultural and linguistic diversity and the significance of socio-cultural and political contexts;
14. Employ pedagogically sound and legally defensible instructional practices;
15. Employ adult learning principles in supervising and training other adults;
16. Articulate the historical, philosophical, and legal basis of services for young children;
17. Serve as advocates on behalf of young children and their families;
18. Read and critically apply research and recommended practices.

Objectives:

This course enables students to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of key foundational theory and research related to working with culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young learners, birth through age eight and their families.
2. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to engage in critically reflective practice.
3. Demonstrate the ability to analyze the readings, personal experiences and learning activities from a socio-cultural and social justice perspective, from the perspectives of the separate disciplines of early childhood education, early childhood special education, bilingual education, and multicultural education, as well as from a unified perspective.
4. Demonstrate the ability to link theory, research, and practice to dilemmas that occur in providing services to diverse young learners and their families, including those related to democracy and social justice.
5. Demonstrate the ability to lead integrative seminar discussions using theoretical and research readings.
6. Demonstrate the ability to assess seminar participants' prior knowledge and to utilize adult learning principles in seminar leadership.
7. Demonstrate the ability to articulate in a written paper guiding principles for a unified perspective and its implications for teaching practices and advocacy- bringing together research, theory, and critical analysis of current issues.

Required Texts:

Brookfield, S. D. (1995). *Developing critical thinkers: Challenging adults to explore alternative ways of thinking and acting*. Newark, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN 1-55542-356-6

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: The New Press. ISBN 1-56584-180-8

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York: Free Press. ISBN 0-68483631-9

Florio-Ruane, S. (2001). *Teacher education and the cultural imagination: Autobiography, conversations, and narrative*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. (One Chapter)

Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum. ISBN 0-8264-0611-4

Nieto, S. (1999). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*. New York: Teachers College Press. ISBN 0-8077-3782-8

Skirtic, T. M. Selected readings. List will be provided.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" and other conversations about race*. New York: Basic Books. ISBN 0-465-09129-6 (Book from previous semester)

Selection of Additional Readings:

This course requires the development of a statement of guiding principles. Thus, it is recommended that students make use of all of the texts that have been used in their prior three semesters of coursework. In addition, the following texts might serve as useful reading resources for the guiding principles paper and to prepare for the Reflective Practitioner Workshop.

Banks, J.A. (2001). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and Teaching*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Baker, C & Hornberger, N.H. (2001). *An introductory reader to the writings of Jim Cummins*. New York: Multilingual Matters, LTD.

Dahlberg, G. and Moss, P. (1999) *Beyond quality in Early Childhood Education*. Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Garcia, E.E., McLaughlin, B., Spodek, B. & Saracho, O., Eds. (1995). *Meeting the challenge of linguistic and cultural diversity in early childhood education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Goldstein, T. (2000). "I'm not White: Anti-racist teacher education for White early childhood educators." *Contemporary Issues in Early Education*, 2, (1), 3-13.

Kincheloe, J.L. and Steinberg, S.R. (1998). *Unauthorized methods: Strategies for critical teaching*. New York: Routledge.

Lewis-Charp, H. (Dec 2003). Breaking the silence: White students' perspectives on race in multiracial schools." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 279-285.

Mallory, B.L. & New, R.S. (Eds.). (1994). *Diversity and developmentally appropriate practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

McIntosh, P. (1997). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, 49, 10-12. [<http://www.uwm.edu/~gjay/Whiteness/mcintosh.htm>].

Noddings, Nel.

Oakes, J. & Lipton, M. (2003). *Teaching to change the world*. New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-240738-7

Polite L. & Baird Saenger, E. B. (Dec 2003). A pernicious silence: Confronting race in the elementary classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 274-278.

Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Skrtic, T.M. (1995) *Disability & democracy: Reconstructing (special) education for post*

- modernity*. New York: Teachers College Press. ISBN 0-8077-3410 (Used copies available)
- Sleeter & McLaren (1995) *Multicultural education, critical pedagogy & the politics of difference*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Wasserman, S. (2000). *Serious players in the primary classroom*, (2nd Ed). New York: Teachers College Press. ISBN: 0-8077-3986-3.
- Wink, J. (2000). *Critical Pedagogy: Notes from the real world*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman. ISBN: 0-8013-3257-5.

Course Requirements:

As a student in this class, you will be expected to:

1. Be prepared for all class sessions by reading all assigned materials. Attend and actively participate in all class sessions. You are responsible for notifying the instructors ahead of time if you are unable to attend. You are expected to bring the assigned textbook for the day and other assigned materials to class.
2. Complete all assignments by the day they are required.
3. Plan and implement two professional development sessions.
4. Maintain an autobiographical learning journal to reflect on your life experiences from the perspective of the assigned readings.
5. Be an ally by encouraging dialogue, reflection, and active participation among all class members.
6. Prepare a Statement of Guiding Principles as the introductory portion of your portfolio. The portfolio meets the Graduate School of Education master's degree comprehensive exam requirement.

Performance Based Assessment and Evaluation Criteria:

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| 1. Autobiographical Learning Journey | 30% |
| 2. Professional Development Leadership Model (Seminar leadership--20%; Reflective Practitioner Workshop--20%) | 40% |
| 3. Statement of Guiding Principles for Work with Diverse Young Learners and Their Families (Must relate the research and theory of the four disciplines to the three age groups, to families, and to examples from practice) | 20% |
| 4. Participation (Attendance, active participation in all class and online activities, | 10% |

including those assigned by peer presenters, preparation for each seminar as evidenced by contributions to discussion of key concepts from readings)

Grading Scale:

A 95-100	B+ 87-89	C 70-79
A- 90-94	B 84-86	F below 70
	B- 83-80	

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Date:

Topics:

- January 25: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM NCBI Workshop, Johnson Center Rm G. Workshop facilitated by Barbara Davis, Dennis Webster and members of Cohort 9
- January 26: 1: 00 PM – 4:00 PM UTEEM Orientation, Johnson Center Rooms G. Beginning a journey of critically reflective practice surrounding the sensitive issues of self-identity, race, culture, and ethnicity related to Plaus' *Understanding Prejudice*.
- 8:00-10:00 PM, *Open the Doors, Virginia*, a play about Brown vs Topeka.
- January 27 10: 00- 4:00 PM, UTEEM Orientation SUB II. Brown vs Topeka and the role of race in today's schools. Discussion of course syllabus. Overview of class texts. Selection of seminar texts.

Distribute Handout: Florio-Ruane article on autobiography

February 3 Continuation of reflections on identity, race, culture, ethnicity and white privilege and implications on the role of the teacher. Learning through autobiography.

Assignment Due: Read Florio-Ruane article on autobiography (Handout).
Review Tatum book; bring book to class
In class, Autobiographical Connection to Tatum

February 10 Defining the critically reflective practitioner: Brookfield, *Developing Critical Thinkers*.

Assignment Due: Read Brookfield, Chapters 1-7, 11-12

February 17 Foundations in progressive education: Dewey, *Democracy and Education*.

Assignment Due: Read Dewey, *Democracy and Education*
Dewey Seminar Leadership Team:
Autobiographical Connection to Brookfield

February 24 Reflective Practitioner Workshop, Themes from *Democracy and Education* .

Assignment Due: Autobiographical Connections to Dewey

March 3 Cultural contexts of education: Discuss Delpit *Other people's children*

Assignment Due: Read Delpit *Other people's children*
Delpit Seminar Leadership Team:

March 10 Reflective Practitioner Workshop, Themes from *Cultural contexts of education*

Assignment Due: Autobiographical Connections to Delpit
Delpit Seminar Leadership Team

March 14 – 18 SPRING BREAK

March 24 Socio-political contexts of education: Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Assignment Due: Read Freire;
Freire Seminar Leadership Team:

March 31 Reflective Practitioner Workshop, Themes from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Assignment Due: Autobiographical Connections to Freire
Freire Seminar Leadership Team:

- April 7 Creating multicultural communities in Modern classrooms. Nieto, *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*
- Assignment Due:** Read Nieto;
Nieto Seminar Leadership Team:
- April 14 Reflective Practitioner Workshop, Themes from *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*
- Assignment Due:** Autobiographical Connection to Nieto
- April 21 Special education in modern democracy: Skirtic, *Disability & democracy: Reconstructing (special) education for post modernity. (Selected Readings)*
- Assignment Due:** Read Skirtic readings
Skirtic Seminar Leadership Team:
- April 28 Reflective Practitioner Workshop, Themes from *Disability & democracy: Reconstructing (special) education for post modernity.*
- Assignment Due:** Autobiographical Connections to Skirtic
Skirtic Seminar Leadership Team:
- May 5 Passage to Critically Reflective Practice: Transforming Story of Self;
Processing the journey of crafting guiding principles
- Assignment Due:** Guiding Principles; Sharing from your autobiographical log;
Reflecting on your process in crafting your guiding principles
- May 16,17,18 Presentation of Guiding Principles and Portfolios to UTEEM faculty

Description of Assignments

1. Professional Development Leadership Model

This three-part assignment is designed to support the development of your professional leadership skills. You are asked to critically reflect on your life experiences through the lens of the assigned foundational works. In small groups, you are expected to use adult learning principles to plan and lead a seminar and a reflective practice workshop.

(A) Seminar Leadership. In small groups, each of you will be responsible for leading a two-hour seminar session on one of the class texts. Your job is to scaffold and support your classmates' understanding of the key issues raised by the author through at least two activities that enables the participants to dialogue with each other about the books key ideas and have a hands-on experience that helps them better understand the author's views. Additionally, the seminar leaders should allow time for the participants to address questions, concerns/challenges and to consider what would help them to implement the authors' ideas in their personal life or in their work with diverse communities.

Each member of the seminar group is responsible for assuming a leadership role. Leadership will be demonstrated by your ability to function as an expert with reference to the readings and on your ability to support, monitor, and evaluate participants' learning. As a group, it is your job to ensure that all class members have participation opportunities. You should include multiple and varied learning opportunities in your seminar sessions that embody the perspective of the text. The reading should be the focus of the day and all class members should have the opportunity to demonstrate their understandings of the reading.

- **At least a week prior to your seminar you need to:**

- 1) Electronically submit a detailed agenda/plan outlining the key points to be addressed and your proposed activities to the course instructor;
- 2) Finalize your plans after receiving course instructors' feedback; and
- 3) Prepare your classmates for any assignments or roles you expect them to take.

- **On the day of your seminar**

- 1) Provide the course instructors with a detailed agenda/plan and any handouts prior to the start of the class
- 2) Provide peers with an evaluation form to provide feedback on your session
- 3) Bring any relevant materials to support class activities
- 4) Be prepared to stay after class to debrief with course instructor.

(B) Reflective Practitioner Workshop – The purpose of this presentation is to emphasize the critical reflection skills presented by Brookfield and connect them to the key ideas you helped develop in the Seminar Leadership presentation. You will be responsible for leading a one and a half hour workshop session. Your group will also be responsible for finding other resources/cases/ websites/videos that facilitate critical reflection and the themes discussed in the Seminar. Your job is to scaffold and support your classmates' understanding of Brookfield's

message and to help build your classmates' skills as reflective practitioners through an activity that enables them to actively engage in a critically reflective process.

- **At Least a Week Prior to the Presentation** you need to
 - 1) Electronically submit to your instructors a detailed agenda/plan of your presentation,
 - 2) Finalize your plans after receiving feedback from your instructors, and
 - 3) Prepare your classmates for any assignments or roles you expect them to take.

- **On the Day of Your Workshop**
 - 1) Provide the instructors with a revised copy of your detailed agenda and related handouts,
 - 2) Bring copies of relevant materials for your classmates including an agenda,
 - 3) At the end of your session, provide your peers with an evaluation form that will help them to critically reflective on your presentation, and
 - 4) Be prepared to stay after class to debrief with the course instructor.

(C) **Group and Individual Critical Reflection**

No Later than a Week after your Reflective Practitioner Workshop

- 1) Submit a short **group** reflective piece on the process that you experienced as a team as you prepared for and presented your Seminar and workshop. Incorporate and reflect on the feedback from your peers,
- 2) Attach the feedback forms to your group reflective piece as an appendix, and
- 3) Submit a one-page **individual** reflective piece on your reaction to the preparation and presentation process.

2. **Autobiographical Diary**

This assignment is designed to stimulate your thinking about who you are and how your life history impacts your emerging guiding principles about working with CLAD children and their families.

Each student will be expected to maintain an autobiographical diary in which you will critically reflect on your life experiences through the lens of the assigned foundational works. You will be expected to use examples from your personal experiences or dilemmas from your work with diverse children to reflect on how your perceptions and assumptions influence your actions and behaviors towards culturally, linguistically and ability diverse young children and their families. As you reflect on the ideas/themes presented by the author ask yourself “why?” you have such feelings, views, reactions, etc. Explore the basis of what comes up for you and of the assumptions you hold, and examine the experiences that helped form the views. Using the message and key points of the assigned readings you are also expected to explore alternative ways of thinking and behaving.

3. **Statement of Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning**

As part of this class, you will be developing the introductory portion of your portfolio. This paper should describe your guiding principles for working with culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families. It should provide a reflective picture of you as a learner, and an understanding of how you integrated the knowledge, skills and experience you gained through your UTEEM program. Your paper should contain insights about themes and connections that you have found among texts, ideas, theories and experiences. It should explain how and why these are significant to you and the process by which they all came together for you. You should identify specific readings, theories, presentations, models in early childhood education, etc. that you found especially important, meaningful or problematic to you and analyze why. Be sure to use specific examples to illustrate your points, including examples from your field experiences and the many dilemmas that you have faced.

Because the key to good reflection and self-reflection is analyses, strive to ask the question "why?" Ask yourself "why did this touch me? What about my own previous experience influenced how I thought about this? What assumptions did I have about working with children and families? How were those assumptions challenged, changed or reinforced? What helped me to see things from another perspective? What is still hard for me? What do I still wonder about? In becoming critically reflective, we must also learn to speak about our practice and our lives in a way that is authentic and consistent. "Speaking authentically means that we are alert to the voices inside us that are not our own, the voices that have been deliberately implanted" (Brookfield, 1995, p. 45).

Some of the following questions may assist you in being critically self-reflective:

- 1) What parts of the UTEEM interdisciplinary philosophical base have been most significant for you (challenging, pivotal) and why?
- 2) What insights have you gained about multiple perspectives (including differences among the disciplines of special education, early childhood education, bilingual education, and multicultural education; aspects of gender, culture, and family experience; and sociocultural context)?
- 3) How have you changed as a learner and what influenced that change? For example, as you look back on your early readings, papers, views expressed in class discussions, and your experience of UTEEM instructional strategies, what has changed and why?
- 4) What has surprised you about what you have learned and why?
- 5) What questions remain unanswered for you as a learner and a teacher?

The paper should be written in a scholarly style and should be **AT LEAST** 10 pages. Be sure to include citations from all appropriate readings to date as well as from at least **five additional readings. These readings must be over and above any that have been assigned in any of your coursework.** You must use APA format. It is expected that all references provided will have been read by you and will be analyzed using your own words.

The Guiding Principles will be due May 5. You will be asked to share your reflections on the process by which you arrived at these guiding principles in class on May 5 and relate it to both the process and content utilized in this class and throughout your UTEEM experience.