

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Graduate School of Education**

***EDUC 542: Foundations of Education***

Fall 2012

Mondays 7:20pm - 10pm, West 1001

Aug 27, 2012 - Dec 19, 2012

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**Course Description**

Examines the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of education as they relate to elementary schools, with a particular emphasis on teaching a culturally diverse population. Students will develop an understanding of the relationship between society and education. Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Elementary Education licensure program.

**Learning outcomes**

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. identify important historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of public educational practice;
2. discuss contemporary educational initiatives and analyze their impact on educating a culturally diverse population of students;
3. discuss laws related to students' and teachers' rights and responsibilities

**Nature of the Course**

This course is structured to utilize multiple instruction formats. We will engage in face-to-face class sessions, as well as regularly scheduled online discussions and activities. Face to face class sessions will include small/large group discussions and tasks, lecture, and student leading of discussions.

**Course Assumptions**

This course operates with the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and the most meaningful learning opportunities are those where you have the opportunity to offer and explore diverse perspectives with peers. To do this, you are expected to regularly contribute to class discussions as well as genuinely listen to peers as they do the same. Agreement is not mandatory; consideration and respect are. This means that you must be "present" throughout all discussions and activities.

**National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Program Standards for Elementary Teacher Preparation**

1. Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior among students at the K-6 level to foster active engagement in learning, self motivation, and positive social interaction and to create supportive learning environment.
2. Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the elementary classroom.
3. Candidates understand practices and behaviors that identify and develop the competence of a professional career teacher.

**8 VAC 20-25-30. Technology standards**

- A. Instructional personnel shall be able to demonstrate effective use of a computer system and utilize computer software.
- B. Instructional personnel shall be able to apply knowledge of terms associated with educational computing and technology.
- C. Instructional personnel shall be able to apply computer productivity tools for professional use.
- D. Instructional personnel shall be able to use electronic technologies to access and exchange information.

**Readings**

Spring, J. (2012). *American education* (15<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Kozol, J. (2005). *The shame of the nation: The restoration of apartheid schooling in America*. New York: Broadway Publishing.

Additional selected readings will be posted on Blackboard.

**Assignments**

Readings and Dialectical Journals	20
Online Activities and Exit Slips	15
Educational Autobiography	5
Philosophical Research and Cases	10
Current Events	10
Reflective Practitioner Paper (PBA)	40
	100

*Readings and Dialectical Journals (20 pts)*

There is a good deal of reading in this course and it is your responsibility to read the assigned book and article selections every week. Just completing the readings however is not enough to maximize your learning opportunities. You also need to analyze the readings in terms of your prior learning, personal experiences, and other readings. Therefore, it is expected that you employ active reading strategies by utilizing a dialectical journal. In this journal, you will explicitly note places in the text that stand out to you and explore why in a brief note. You may question, disagree, agree, identify

confusion, etc. A dialectical journal is a *conversation between you and the text*. See the handout describing dialectical journals for more information.

- The journal for the weeks' readings should be completed before the class period begins.
- The journal will count towards your weekly class participation and you are expected to bring it to each class session. Each week I will choose two students to share their journal entries with the class, and at several points I will ask you to submit your journal without advance notice.
- Journal entries should be brief, yet thoughtful, and demonstrate genuine consideration of the text.
- In your responses, you should also attempt to connect across readings and entries.

#### *Online Discussions and Activities (15 pts)*

Blackboard will be utilized as a space for extending face-to-face class learning. After class each week, you are expected to log-in to blackboard and post a response. This serves as a type of "exit card" to help you process your immediate learning and to provide me insight into your developing understanding and perspective. Each week there will be a directive for your post. An example directive might be "What is one thing that you learned? What is one question you are wondering right now?". It is expected that your response is brief and that you connect your response to class discussion and the readings. You must post by \_\_\_\_\_ and then post at least one response to a peer by \_\_\_\_\_ (these days/times are to be decided in class).

#### *Education Autobiography (5 pts)*

This autobiography is an informal story of your own experiences in K-12 education. Your written narrative should have two parts. First, provide an overview of your recollections and impressions of your schooling. This should include a description of what kinds of schools you attended, what kinds of classes you were in, and how these spaces shaped and supported your aspirations. You may also want to talk about how you felt about school in general, who was typically in your classes, and the ways in which your family interacted with your education. This section of your paper should include specific data about the demographics and achievement data of your elementary and/or high school's student body as defined by race, social class, gender, disability, and language. All states have something similar to the links below. If you need help locating one for your home state, let me know.

<https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/> (Virginia)

<http://www.nclb.osse.dc.gov/> (DC)

The second half of your paper should explore how these experiences relate to why you want to be a teacher and what kind of teacher you want to be. Think about how your own experiences with school present both opportunities and challenges to your work with your future students. What assumptions do you have about schooling and how do those shape your thinking about being a teacher? What do you anticipate will be easy? What do you anticipate will be a challenge?

Note: This should be a personal experience narrative and written as such. It should be 5-6 pages.

### *Philosophical Research and Cases (10 pts)*

Participate in a jigsaw task where you research one main philosophy of education. Then you will share your learning with peers. Using what you will learn from the jigsaw about various philosophies, create eight short vignettes that each illustrate a philosophy in action in a classroom. In other words, imagine yourself walking into a classroom today and describe what you might see and hear if the teacher (personally) majorly aligned with a given philosophy. Include such details as teacher actions and responses, student actions and responses, curriculum content, student population and/or grouping, and room arrangement and decoration. Each vignette should concern the same grade level at the same school. Write the vignettes from the perspective of an observer who is visiting the classroom. Each vignette should be a half-page to a page. At the end of the paper, include a half-page to page reflection that identifies and describes your own philosophical leanings related to teaching and learning. You might identify with one philosophy or you might see yourself as a combination of several. Either way, describe your own philosophical beliefs as related to these eight.

### *Current Events (10 pts)*

In partners, you will select a current events news story (video clip or news article within the last month) to share with the class. The story should relate to an educational issue connected to the theme of the week the small group has been assigned. Links to the story should be posted to Blackboard 48 hours before class so that the other students and instructors can familiarize themselves with the issue. The group will be allotted 20-30 minutes in class to facilitate a discussion about the story. The group will be responsible for a one-page handout summarizing the story and identifying 2-3 essential questions they would like to address with the class. Great resources for finding current events news stories include:

- New York Times U.S. Education Section: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/education/index.html>
- Education Week: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html>
- Bridging Differences (blog): <http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/Bridging-Differences/>
- Washington Post Education Section: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education>

In addition to the requirements above, individually, each student will write a 1-page reflection of his or her presentation on the themes raised in the in-class discussion as well as a metacognitive analysis of the process of working with a partner to plan for the class discussion and to create the handout. The reflection is due one week after the presentation and should be emailed to both instructors.

### *Reflective Practitioner Paper (40 pts) PBA*

In order to become reflective practitioners for a multicultural classroom, candidates must reflect on a variety of professional issues that teachers confront in their day-to-day teaching as well as the broader educational and social context which affects the work of the public school teacher. To this end, the candidates will analyze a current issue/innovation around race and culture, gender equity,

special education, social class, or language diversity. They will then relate it to historical and sociological trends/perspectives as well as to their own experiences.

\*A detailed task description and rubric is attached.

### **Grading Scale**

A=93-100; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=80-86; C=70-79; F=below 70

*Remember: A course grade less than B requires that you retake the course.*

### Note:

Assignments earning less than a passing grade may be rewritten and resubmitted so that the assignment is satisfactorily completed. In fact, because learning is the goal, I may *require* you to redo an assignment that is far below expectations.

**All written papers must be double-spaced, with 1" margins, and in 12-point font (Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial). APA format is expected. If you do not have a 6<sup>th</sup> Edition APA manual, the OWL at Purdue is an excellent resource <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.**

## **University, College, and Elementary Program Policies**

### *CEHD Student Expectations*

Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor. One cell phone will remain on in class that is registered with the Mason Alert System. Visit <https://alert.gmu.edu>, to find out more about Mason's alert system for GMU emergencies.

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

*Honor Code.* To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal integrity, GMU has set forth a code of honor that includes policies on cheating, attempted cheating, lack of class participation in group work, plagiarism, lying and stealing (see link above). The Elementary Program abides by these policies and takes them seriously.

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].

### *Campus Resources*

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

The College of Education and Human Development strives to represent a set of core values that drive the work of faculty and students. These values of collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice are further described on the CEHD website <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

**Course Calendar Fall 2012**

Date	Topic/Guiding questions	Reading/Assignment Due	Outside of/After Class Activity
Aug. 27	Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does Foundations of Education mean?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of schooling?</li> <li>• What is social justice?</li> <li>• Are you <i>Willing to be Disturbed</i>?</li> </ul>		*after class: online reflection post
Sept. 3	Labor Day- No Class		
Sept. 10	Philosophical Foundations of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does it mean to learn?</li> <li>• What is the best way to teach?</li> </ul>	<b>Education Autobiography Due (submit online)</b> Jigsaw (pdf) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plato (idealism)</li> <li>• Adler (perennialism)</li> <li>• Dewey (pragmatism)</li> <li>• Montessori (constructivism)</li> <li>• Skinner (behaviorism)</li> <li>• Noddings (care)</li> <li>• Neill (existentialism)</li> <li>• Freire (critical pedagogy)</li> </ul>	Research your philosophy and related philosopher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the chart.</li> <li>• Philosophy dinner party tasks</li> </ul> *after class: online reflection post
Sept. 17	Philosophical Foundations of Education Cont'd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinner Party!</li> </ul>	Dinner party tasks	Start working on Reflective Practitioner Paper
Sept. 24	The Social, Economic, and Political Goals of School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do we teach what we do?</li> <li>• What are the effects of the goals of school?</li> </ul>	<b>Philosophical Cases Due (submit online)</b>  Spring Ch. 1, 2, 4	*after class: online reflection post

Oct. 1	Introduction to Minority Education Gender and Sexuality in Education	Spring Ch. 6 AAUW (pdf) Weaver-Hightower (pdf)  <b>Gender and sexuality current event groups</b>	*after class: online reflection post
<i>Tuesday</i> Oct. 9★	Native American Education	Child (pdf) Adams (pdf) Sheets Ch. 1 (pdf) Spring Ch. 5 (pp. 102-115)  <b>Ethnicity and race current event groups</b>	*after class: online reflection post
Oct. 15	African American Education	Anderson excerpts (pdf) Morris and Morris (pdf) Zimmerman (pdf)  <b>Ethnicity and race current event groups</b>	*after class: online reflection post
Oct. 22	English Language Learner Education	Spring Ch. 7 San Miguel (pdf) Valenzuela (pdf)  <b>Language current event groups</b>	*after class: online reflection post
Oct. 29	Students with Disabilities Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do we rely on IQ scores?</li> <li>• What has education looked like for SWD?</li> </ul>	Ch. 5 (pp. 115-124) Fass (pdf) RTI readings (pdf)  <b>Students with disabilities current event groups</b>	*after class: online reflection post

Nov. 5	The state of education today and current issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the past affected our present?</li> <li>• How does research tell the effects of school on educational and social success?</li> </ul>	Kozol 1-5 Spring Ch. 7	*after class: online reflection post
Nov. 12	The state of education today and current issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has NCLB affected education?</li> <li>• Leading topic group</li> </ul>	Kozol 6-9 Spring Ch. 8-10 Ravitch (pdf)	*after class: online reflection post
Nov. 19	No class- Individual PBA conferences		
Nov. 26	Implications for today <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading topic group</li> <li>• Culturally responsive teaching</li> </ul>	Kozol Ch. 10 (through) a note to teachers Ladson-Billings (pdf)	*after class: online reflection post
Dec. 3	Implications for teaching our students today <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last F2F class</li> <li>• Pulling it all together</li> </ul>	Cowhey (pdf)	
Dec. 12	<b>Reflective Practitioner Paper (PBA) Due (submit online)</b>		

Note: Calendar is tentative and may be modified in line with course needs.

(pdf) readings and (video) are located on Blackboard.

all (submit online) assignments should be uploaded BEFORE class begins that day.

★Oct 8<sup>th</sup> is Columbus Recess; Monday classes take place on Tuesday

## Dialectical Journals

*dialectical (die-uh-LEKT-i-cul), n. : the art or practice of arriving at the truth through logical arguments.*

A dialectical journal is another name for a double-entry journal or a reader-response journal. A dialectical journal is a journal that records a dialogue, or conversation, between the ideas in the text (the words that you are reading) and the ideas of the reader (the person who is doing the reading). This is what you must do in your journal—keep a dialogue with yourself. In your journal, have a conversation with the text and with yourself. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas while you read.

### How Do I Keep A Dialectical Journal?

Your journal will use a two-entry form:

- Fold the page in half.
- In the LEFT COLUMN, write down direct quotes (with page numbers) from the readings. These should be points that you think are interesting or important.
- In the RIGHT COLUMN, write down YOUR OWN thoughts, commentary, and questions about the quotes in the LEFT COLUMN. Why did you choose this quote? Is it a main idea? Something you disagree with? Something you question? Does it connect back to prior class discussion/reading? Be specific.
- You should have at least 3 quotes from each reading or chapter (2 from shorter selections)

## Reflective Practitioner Paper

“A large part of the problem [of the achievement gap] is that many educators do not understand what it means to engage in educational practices that promote equity. Equity involves more than simply ensuring that children have equal access to education. Equity also entails a focus on outcomes and results”

(Boykin & Noguera, 2011, p. viii)

In consideration of the above quote, this assignment will offer you an opportunity to expand your understanding of public education as a system that both expands and diminishes equity. Taken another way, you will explore the following question: What are the tensions within efforts to reform public education and how do these debates shape your thinking and actions as a teacher? Follow the steps below to successfully write this scholarly paper.

1. Pick an educational initiative introduced through class (readings, discussion, materials).
2. Research who this initiative is designed to benefit (a group of students targeted by the initiative).
3. Find peer-reviewed research articles and review class readings that address the initiative and its impact on students (If you are not sure about whether a research journal is peer-reviewed consult with me). Take notes as you read.
4. Write your paper. Include the following as headings so that you and the reader [your instructor] will know exactly where you are headed and whether you have addressed all of the content requirements.

- Introduction (this is where you introduce your topic, establish its significance (hook), and give your reader an advance organizer for the paper)

#### Part One (The initiative)

- Description of the initiative
- Background and historical information of initiative
- Strengths of the initiative
- Weaknesses of/challenges to the initiative
- Implications for teachers (What does this initiative mean for teachers? You will want to think about what is essential for teachers to consider, know, and do within this initiative)

#### Part Two (The students)

- Background of the student population targeted by the initiative (may include US, VA, DC demographics)
- Classroom/school implications for young learners in this population (How has this population of students historically experienced education? How do identity characteristics of this population intersect with characteristics of school?)
- Implications for teachers such as yourself (compare/contrast your background) teaching this population of students (You must first deconstruct and then describe relevant aspects of your identity. Then you must analyze how these pieces of your identity potentially intersect with teaching this student population. Use first person here to then generalize to a broader population of teachers like you.)

#### Part Three

- Conclusions (Based on what you have presented in your paper, this is where you draw conclusions about the impact of the initiative on students. Who is benefitted and how? Who is disadvantaged and how? What does that mean for the group of students targeted by the initiative?)

#### Tips

While you are writing the paper make sure that you are:

- Integrating concepts from readings. You CANNOT make a claim without evidence to support it. That evidence comes from your readings and research. Each section needs multiple (2 or more different) sources.
- Integrating class discussions and integrating experiences and/or personal reflection.

#### Clarity of writing

- It is logically organized
- Has an introduction that includes the goals/purpose of the paper
- Has points representing strengths and weaknesses of the initiative
- Has smooth transitions between ideas

- Ends with a conclusion that restates the main points of the paper (without introducing new ideas).
- Information is presented clearly within the page limits (8-10 pages)
- The paper has NO grammar or spelling errors
- Read and re-read your writing before submitting
- If academic writing is difficult for you, ask a colleague or friend to review your work and provide feedback or visit the GMU Writing Center.

#### APA format

- title page
- headings
- page numbers
- proper use of in-text citations and appropriately formatted reference list
- Tips: Do NOT use standalone quotes in your paper. See the “Citation Cheat Sheet” on blackboard for help with this. Do NOT include anything in your reference list that you do not cite in your paper.

Reflective Practitioner Rubric	<b>4 Exemplary (Met)</b>	<b>3 Maturing (Met)</b>	<b>2 Developing (Not Met)</b>	<b>1 Unsatisfactory (Not Met)</b>
<b>Description of the education initiative</b> <b>ACEI 5.1</b>	Presents appropriate and complete description of the education initiative, and includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate description of the education initiative, but is incomplete and/or includes only some supporting references	Presents some description of the education initiative, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks description of the education initiative
<b>Significant historical background information regarding the education initiative</b> <b>ACEI 5.1</b>	Presents appropriate and complete significant historical and background information of the education initiative, and includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate significant historical and background information on the education initiative, but is incomplete and/or include only some supporting references	Presents some significant historical and background information on the education initiative, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks significant historical and background information on the education initiative
<b>Strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative</b> <b>ACEI 5.1</b>	Presents appropriate and complete discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative, and includes multiple and different references	Presents appropriate strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative, but is incomplete and/or includes only some supporting references	Presents some strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative
<b>Implications of the education initiative for teachers</b> <b>ACEI 5.1</b>	Presents appropriate and complete implications of the education initiative for teachers, and includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate implications of the education initiative for teachers, but is incomplete and/or includes only some supporting references	Presents some implications of the education initiative for teachers, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks implications of the education initiative for teachers in the identified population
<b>Background information about the targeted population of students</b> <b>ACEI 3.2</b>	Presents appropriate and complete background information about the targeted population of students and includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate background information about the targeted population of students, but is not complete and/or includes some supporting references	Presents some background information about the targeted population of students, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks background information about the targeted population of students

<b>Classroom/school implications for students in this population</b>  <b>ACEI 3.2</b>	Presents appropriate and complete implications for students in the targeted population; includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate implications for students in the targeted population, but it is not complete and/or includes only some supporting references	Presents some implications for students in the targeted population, but it is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks implications for students in the targeted population
<b>Implications for teachers such as yourself teaching this population of students</b>  <b>ACEI 3.2</b>	Presents appropriate and complete background information about the culture, knowledge, and attitudes of the identified preservice teacher and includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate background information about the culture, knowledge, and attitudes of the identified preservice teacher, but is not complete and/or includes some supporting references	Presents some background information about the culture, knowledge, and attitudes of the identified preservice teacher, but is not sufficient and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks background information about the culture, knowledge, and attitudes of the identified preservice teacher
<b>Conclusions regarding the impact of the initiative on students</b>  <b>ACEI 3.2</b>	Presents appropriate and complete conclusions regarding the impact of the initiative; includes multiple and different supporting references	Presents appropriate conclusions regarding the impact of the initiative but it is not complete; includes some supporting references	Presents some conclusions regarding the impact of the initiative but conclusions may be vague, and/or lacks supporting references	Lacks conclusions or conclusions presented are illogical based on the rest of the paper, and/or lacks any supporting references

\*note: multiple references means (2 or more), some means (1), none means (0).

ACEI/NCATE Standards addressed in this task

3.2 Adaptation to diverse students—Candidates understand how elementary students differ in their development and approaches to learning, and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse students.

5.1 Professional growth, reflection and evaluation—Candidates are aware of and reflect on their practice in light of research on teaching, professional ethics, and resources available for professional learning; they continually evaluate the effects of their professional decisions and actions on students, families, and other professionals in the learning community and actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally

In addition to the above standards, this paper must include the following elements of a well-written paper in APA format:

<i>Element</i>	<i>No Errors (1 or 2pts)</i>	<i>Some Errors (0.5 or 1pt)</i>	<i>Multiple Errors (0pts)</i>
Organization: Title Page, Page Numbers, Headings (1)			
Citations in text (1)			
Reference page (1)			
Includes introduction (1)			
Clarity of Writing (2)			
Grammar/Mechanics (2)			

Standards score	<b>/32</b>
Elements of writing score	<b>/8</b>
<b>Total score</b>	<b>/40</b>