

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

EDUC 542: Foundations of Education

Summer 2013

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays - Robinson Hall A210

May 22, 2013 – June 20, 2013



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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-12 and by appointment; Skype appointments can also be made.

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 **philosophical, historical, 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.

In addition to this core assumption, there are five fundamental expectations I have of you, and that you should have of me. Please read them carefully and commit to them.

1- BE PRESENT

If you are planning on being absent or have an emergency, please contact me by email before class. **Missing more than one class period or missing any class without contacting me will affect the participation portion of your grade and may warrant further administrative action.** We only meet for six weeks, so our time together is very important.

When you are in class, I expect you to be both mentally and as physically present by being attentive and engaged. Cell phones are for emergency use only – **no texting, social media, or phone calls during class time.** I encourage you to bring laptops, and will ask you to open them when only their use is appropriate or necessary.

2- BE THOUGHTFUL

We will be grappling with many difficult questions throughout the semester that may challenge people's beliefs or assumptions and that rarely have a right or wrong answer. This is done in the spirit of intellectual inquiry and demands that we are all respectful, honest, and willing to engage tough questions with each other as a compassionate community. Agreement is not required, but mutual respect and consideration is.

3- BE PROACTIVE

Both Paula and I are here to support your learning this semester and will provide you with feedback in response to the course's formative and summative assessments. We cannot read minds, however – if you have any questions or concerns throughout the semester, please schedule an appointment with me or Paula and we would be happy to make any adjustments we can to facilitate a meaningful course experience.

4- BE COLLABORATIVE

We are a community of learners who are here to support and challenge each other. Each of us has the responsibility to be an engaged, reliable, and respectful group member who brings something to the class. You will be together as a cohort for many semesters; I guarantee that you will enjoy this experience much more if you work well together.

5- BE PROUD OF YOUR WORK

Each assignment builds upon the last and coordinates with the activities on the day it was due. Extensions, therefore, should only be requested when absolutely necessary and as soon as possible. If you need more time to do your best work, let me know. **More than three delayed assignments for any reason will result in scheduling a conference with the instructor and the program coordinator and may result in a student failing the class.**

External Standards

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.

Required Texts

Spring, J. (2012). *American education* (15th 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/Grading

Reading Reflection Blog	15%
Saturday Tasks	20%
Educational Autobiography (Parts 1, 2, and 3)	15%
Exit Slips	10%
Current Events	10%
Reflective Practitioner Paper (PBA)	30%
	100%

CONTEXTS	Philosophy	Historical	Sociology	Ed Initiatives (Reforms)	Laws
<i>Individual (You!)</i>	Autobiography 1	Autobiography 2	Autobiography 3	PBA	Exit Slip
<i>Northern VA</i>	Exit Slip	Exit Slip	Exit Slip	Exit Slip	Exit Slip
<i>National</i>	Saturday Task	RR Blog	Saturday Task	PBA	Exit Slip
<i>International</i>	RR Blog	Saturday Task	Exit Slip	Exit Slip	Exit Slip

Readings Reflection Blog (15 pts)

There is a good deal of reading in this course and it is your responsibility to read the assigned book and article selections for every class. Just completing the readings, however, is not enough to maximize your learning opportunities. It is therefore expected that you will complete a written response to an assigned prompt for each of the readings. These prompts will encourage you to analyze the readings in terms of your prior learning, personal experiences and class discussions. In these responses, it is expected that you will demonstrate both your understanding of the assigned readings, and also your reflections and opinions. In addition to answering the prompt, you will also need to write a minimum of two discussion questions (appended to the prompt responses) that the instructors may choose to use as the basis of class discussion that day. These reflections will be posted on individual blogs that are viewable by the rest of the class.

- The blog posts and discussion questions are due by **10:00 AM** before each class.
- Prompt responses and discussion questions should be posted to your blog in Blackboard.
- A formative and summative rubric for the reading reflection blogs can be found on Blackboard.

Saturday Tasks (20 pts)

Blackboard will be utilized as a space for asynchronous learning that will take the place of on-campus Saturday class sessions. All information about these varied tasks and assessments can be found on Blackboard under the tab "Saturday Tasks." Each Saturday Task is released on the previous Wednesday at 5:00pm and is due Sunday by midnight.

Education Autobiography (15 pts)

This autobiography has three parts that connect with the three main themes of the class: philosophies of education, the history of the structures of schooling (including relevant laws and reforms), and the sociological foundations of diverse student populations. These are posted as private journal entries on Blackboard. More information about the Educational Autobiography (Parts 1,2, and 3) can be found on Blackboard.

- Part I: Philosophy
Apply your new knowledge about the major educational philosophies and theorists to identify which ideas about the nature of knowledge and learning guided your own schooling experiences. What were the consequences of these forces on your life (for better or worse)? What assumptions do you have (or did you have) about learning/knowledge? How does that inform what you think about teaching? What do you anticipate will be easy? What do you anticipate will be a challenge?
- Part II: History
Apply your new knowledge about the major historical forces shaping the structure and purposes of schools to identify which trends most powerfully shaped your own schooling experiences. What were the consequences of these forces on your life (for better or worse)? What assumptions do you have (or did you have) about schooling? How does that inform what you think about teaching? What do you anticipate will be easy? What do you anticipate will be a challenge?

- Part III: Sociology

Apply your new knowledge about the major sociological forces at work in American society (gender, race, ethnicity, language, culture, social class, and (dis)ability) to identify how these aspects of your identity shape your life decisions and thinking – especially your ideas about teaching. What were the consequences of these forces on your life (for better or worse)? What assumptions do you have (or did you have) about yourself and your students? How does that inform what you think about teaching? What do you anticipate will be easy? What do you anticipate will be a challenge?

Exit Slips

At the end of each face-to-face (F2F) class session, you are expected to complete an “Exit Slip” to help you process your immediate learning and to provide us with insight into your developing understanding and perspective. Each day there will be a directive for your Exit Slip. An example directive might be “What is one thing that you learned? What is one question you are wondering right now?” Other times, the exit slip may be more substantial. In addition to helping us keep track of your thinking, the Exit Slips will also serve as a mark of attendance, as it will not be possible to complete this activity in the event of a class absence. More information about Exit Slips can be found on Blackboard.

Current Events (10 pts)

In partners or trios, 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 topic of the day your small group has been assigned. On your group’s Blackboard Wiki page, you should include links to the story, a summary of the story, and 2-3 questions to prompt discussion in the comments section. Great resources for finding current events news stories include (but are NOT limited to):

- 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, each student is expected to comment on five other group’s Blackboard Wiki pages. More information about Current Events can be found on Blackboard.

Reflective Practitioner Paper (40 pts – converted to 30% of grade) 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 that 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. This must be uploaded to Taskstream.

*A detailed task description and rubric is attached.

Grading Scale

A=94-100; A-=90-93; B+=86-89; B=80-85; C=70-79; F=below 70

Remember: You must maintain above a B average to remain in the class.

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.

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

TaskStream Requirements

Every student registered for any Elementary Education course with a required performance-based assessment (designated as such in the syllabus) is required to submit this assessment (EDUC 542: Reflective Practitioner Paper) to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of your performance-based assessment will also be provided using TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Course Schedule

This will be available in class and on Blackboard.

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 for a listing of these dispositions. 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/>.

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].

Honor Code. To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie in matters related to academic work.

The Elementary Program abides by these policies and takes them seriously.

Students must also 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/>].

Reflective Practitioner Paper (PBA)

“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 (PBA)	4 Exemplary (Met)	3 Maturing (Met)	2 Developing (Not Met)	1 Unsatisfactory (Not Met)
Description of the education initiative ACEI 5.1	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
Significant historical background information regarding the education initiative ACEI 5.1	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
Strengths and weaknesses of the education initiative ACEI 5.1	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
Implications of the education initiative for teachers ACEI 5.1	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

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

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*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	/32
Elements of writing score	/8
Total score	/40