

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ELS Division

EDUC 301 Section 1: Educationally Diverse Populations—Handicapped, Gifted and
Multicultural
3 Credits, Summer 2016
Monday/ Wednesday, 7:20 - 10:00 Fairfax, West 1001

Instructor

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

A. Prerequisites / Corequisites

None

B. University Catalog Course Description

This course introduces the psychological, sociological, educational, and physical aspects of diverse populations in today's schools for elementary and secondary education. It will cover litigation and legislation pertaining to the education of diverse populations, as well as effective strategies for meeting the educational needs of diverse populations. School-based field experience is required during the course.

C. Expanded Course Description

Not Applicable

Delivery Method

A variety of instructional methods will be used in class. These methods include large and small group discussions, guest speakers, individual/group presentations and individual research, all of which will be structured around readings. Active participation is an important element of this course, especially since we only have 15 class sessions! Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session in order to engage in active listening, dialogue, and the sharing of ideas. Attendance is required for all classes in order to fully engage in the learning activities during class.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- A. High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- B. Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course

Expectations

Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.

Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor. At a minimum, students should check Blackboard once a week and check GMU email daily.

Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course.

Technical Issues: Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

Workload: There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

Advising: If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues, and you are unable to come to the Mason campus, we can meet via telephone or web conference. Send me an email to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

Netiquette: Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. If we have any on-line discussions, I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Explore how the US public school system, researchers and theorists formerly viewed and presently view educational issues regarding students of color, exceptional children, English language learners (ELLs), students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, and multicultural education (MCE);
2. Discuss laws and major court cases related to exceptional children, English language learners, and diversity in schools.
3. Reflect on educational strategies and issues regarding diverse populations.

Professional Standards

This course relates to the standards of multiple professional organizations

Required Textbooks

Cushner, K. McClelland, A., Safford, P. (2012). Human diversity in education: An intercultural approach (7th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Gorski, P.C. (2013). Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap. Willinston, VT: Teachers College Press

Schwarz, P. (2006). From disability to possibility: The power of inclusive classrooms. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Course Assignments

Note: All assignments will be either submitted on Blackboard (in which case they must be submitted by 6 pm on the due date or no credit is given) or as a hard copy at the beginning of the class on the date they are due.

Also, as you complete the course assignments, please know that I am not “pushing” any particular perspective or approach in this class. I will not require or expect you to adopt a specific educational, political, or philosophical perspective or approach. In fact, I would prefer that you disagree with me, each other, and the authors we read as often as possible. The last thing we need is groupthink!

I respect your right to choose to see things from your own perspective. We all should, however, help each other to consider things through different lenses, and we can do this respectfully through dynamic and meaningful dialogue. I do not expect or hope that we will all leave this class sharing the same views. We can all use a little practice existing in a space populated by multiple perspectives, and I hope this class gives us such an opportunity.

I also hope we can all feel comfortable sharing our personal experiences through our discussions and writing. The texts we will read together are one-dimensional and lifeless unless we share our interpretations and evaluations through the lens of our past experiences. That said, the course assignments are:

A. Class Participation (15 points)

Dialogue and interaction are essential aspects of this course. If you are absent from class, or a passive participant, your colleagues will not benefit from your insights. Successful completion of this course requires your attendance of all class sessions. Please text (703-346-5783) or email me (mricharg@gmu.edu) if you must miss a class. And if you do miss a class, you are responsible for completing the readings, turning in your reading reflection, and asking a study buddy for class notes and handouts. Our class discussion will suffer because of your absence, and so will your learning!

B. Field Experience Journal (25 points)

1. Teacher Interview – **June 22** - The purpose of this assignment is to help you better understand different approaches a teacher may use for diverse students. You will explore the following: how the teacher defines diversity; his/her approach to culturally responsive teaching, exceptional learners and more. You will find out about the teacher's background and explore how this impacts her/his approach to teaching. We will discuss this further in class. The interview write-up will be 3-4 pages long and you will present it to the class.
2. Diversity Experience- **July 11** – This assignment gives you the opportunity to spend 1 to 2 hours in a setting where you have never been before in which you will encounter people who are different from you in at least one of the following ways: SES, religion, sexual orientation, language, race, cultural background, or physical ability. You may have someone accompany you who is familiar with the site (to act as a guide) or someone who is also unfamiliar with the area but will make you feel more comfortable. You may also visit the place you choose alone. Detailed instructions and assignment guidelines will be provided on Blackboard. You will write a 3-4 page narrative reflection on your experience and present it to the class.

Possible Diversity Experiences include:

Category	Possible Experiences
Social class	-Attend a soup kitchen, standing in line and eating with those at the kitchen -Visit a social security office -Visit a homeless shelter -Visit a Salvation Army or Goodwill thrift shop
Religion	- Attend a service not of your predominant faith -Visit a center of worship and participate in a religious studies class (Sunday School)
Gender/ Sexuality	- Volunteer at a rape crisis center or battered women's center - Visit a gay bar (students aged 21 and older)

Race/Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit a minority house of worship - Shop in an ethnic neighborhood different than you own - Take part in an ethnic pride day event
Language language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend an activity, class or service not in your own
Exceptionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Volunteer at a program for adults with disabilities -Volunteer with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society -Visit and/or volunteer at a Special Olympics event

C. Educational Biography Project (35%)

These two assignments are meant to have you critically reflect on your own experiences in school. Many times teachers forget what's its like to be a student and have a difficult time noticing and understanding why a student is struggling. I cannot emphasize how important it is for teachers to reflect and write about their own journey in education. Reflect on your failures, successes, struggles, conflicts, the first time a teacher connected with you, the times you were must confused, and the experiences you found the most meaningful.

1. *Autobiography* – **Due June 8** Please write down everything about your experience with the education system from when you began school until entering George Mason University. Include anything significant for you both positive and negative. Please bear in mind that this will serve as a basis for your final paper. This should be 4-6 pages. You may present this to the class.

2. *Critical Analysis* – **Due July 27** This final paper should be a critical analysis of your educational biography including significant reflection on the course experiences, your own original autobiography and course readings. You should answer, "How do I understand my own experiences differently after reading the course materials, field experience project and discussions?" This is the summative assignment in the course and should reference materials we read in class. This paper should be between 8-10 pages excluding references. You may present this to the class.

D. Reading Reflections (25 points)

There is a good deal of thought-provoking reading in this course. Just completing the readings, however, is not enough to maximize your learning opportunities. I am therefore asking that you write a brief reflection on the assigned readings. The reflection process is a not only a means for you to connect to the readings on a personal level, but also to critically analyze the authors' perspectives. Each reflection is due at the beginning of each class. You may present your reflections to the class.

E. Bring a Poem or Song to class (5 bonus points)

Art communicates ideas and emotions in a way that research articles and textbooks cannot. Skilled poets and song-writers can enable us see, feel, experience or think of things in unique ways, or give us a glimpse of places we may never visit on our own. Bring a poem or song to class that deals with the specific topic we are reading

about in class and you can earn up to 5 bonus points! To earn the maximum number of points, lead the class in a discussion of the poem/song and share your interpretation and analysis.

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

This course does not require performance-based assessment.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- c. 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.
- d. 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/>).
- e. 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/>).
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. 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/>).
- h. The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a

Mason student or the community (<http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>) and the staff will follow up with the student.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website <http://gse.gmu.edu/>.

Recommended Internet Resources

Brown University: Teaching Diverse Learners:

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/teaching-diverse-learners/strategies-0/culturally-responsive-teaching-0>

Classism <http://www.classism.org/>

Ed Change <http://www.edchange.org/index.html>

Frontline Dropout Nation <http://video.pbs.org/video/2283603203>

Frontline Poor Kids <http://video.pbs.org/video/2306814133/>

George Mason University Library Education InfoGuide

<http://infoguides.gmu.edu/cat.php?cid=2136>

Multicultural Education & Culturally Responsive Teaching

<http://www.ithaca.edu/wise/multicultural/> (good articles/resources)

Office of Special Education (U.S. Department of Education)

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html?src=mr>

Paulo Freire Project <http://www.freireproject.org/>

Purdue Online Writing Lab APA <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Rethinking Racism- Colorblindness <http://www.wycc.org/>

Sexual Orientation Links http://www.ithaca.edu/wise/sexual_orientation/

U.S. Department of Education <http://idea.ed.gov/>

Virginia Department of Education <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>

Proposed Class Schedule

Topic 1: Foundations and History	
June 6	<p><i>Topic:</i> Introductions, course overview, historical overview of diversity in education</p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 1 <p><i>In-class Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics, by Mos Def (in-class handout) <p style="color: green;">Today is the 1st day of Ramadan!</p>
1	
June 8	<p><i>Topic:</i> Race in America</p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 2 • <i>Autobiography due</i> • <i>Reading Reflection due (covering both chapters 1 & 2)</i> <p><i>In-class Readings:</i></p> <p>Latin Night at the Pawn Shop, by Martin Espada (in-class handout)</p>
2	
June 13	<p><i>Topic:</i> Theory behind Multicultural Education</p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 3 and 4 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p><i>In-class Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross, by Langston Hughes (in-class handout) • Theme for English B, by Langston Hughes (in-class handout) <p style="color: green;">Choose Teacher for Interview</p>
3	
Topic 2: Ethnicity	
June 15	<p><i>Topic:</i> The role of identity and ethnicity</p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 6 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p style="color: green;">Conduct Teacher Interview within next three days</p>
4	

Topic 3: Globalization		
5	June 20	<p><i>Topic: The rise of McWorld</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 5 & 7 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p>Write Teacher Interview paper</p>
Topic 4: Language		
6	June 22	<p><i>Topic: Learning communities and language</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 8 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> • <i>Teacher Interview paper due</i>
7	June 27	<p><i>Topic: Struggling readers</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triplett, C. F. (2007), The social construction of “struggle” • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p>Choose Site for Diversity Experience</p>
8	June 29	<p><i>Topic: Children caught between two cultures</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ketner et al. (2004), Identity strategies among adolescent girls of Moroccan descent in the Netherlands. • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p>Complete Diversity Experience by July 5</p>
X	July 4	<p>NO CLASS MEETING</p> <p>Read the Gorski book!!!</p>
Topic 5: Impact of students’ socioeconomic status (SES) in education		
9	July 6	<p><i>Topic: How do you reach students living in poverty?</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorski (2013) All • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p>Write Diversity Experience paper</p>

10	July 11	<p><i>Topic: Social class and social status in education</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 13 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> • <i>Diversity Experience paper due</i>
Topic 6: Religion		
11	July 13	<p><i>Topic: How do we respect religious pluralism in a secular classroom?</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 9 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i>
Topic 7: Gender & Sexual Orientation		
12	July 18	<p><i>Topic: "Girls on one side and boys on the other."</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 10 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p><i>Begin planning and outlining Critical Analysis paper</i></p>
Unit 8: Special education		
13	July 20	<p><i>Topic: Topic: Special education history and laws</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cushner (2015), Chapter 12 • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p><i>Write first draft of Critical Analysis paper</i></p>
14	July 25	<p><i>Topic: Children's realities</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwarz (2006) All • <i>Reading Reflection due</i> <p><i>Revise Critical Analysis paper</i></p>
Topic 9: Course Reflection		
15	July 27	<p><i>Topic: Your growth as a reader, writer and thinker</i></p> <p><i>Assignments due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Critical Analysis paper due</i>

Assessment Rubrics

Available on BB

