

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**  
Graduate School of Education  
EDUC 892 001 - Social Justice and Equity in International Education  
3 Credits, Fall 2017  
4:30-7:10 PM/Tuesdays, Robinson A250

### Faculty

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### Prerequisites/Corequisites

For Ph.D. in International Education Students - EDUC 880, 878, 873 and 815

**University Catalog Course Description:** Examines ideological, cultural, and systemic structural inequities in various educational settings at national and international levels. Focuses on educational practices that promote equity and social change throughout the world.

**Course Overview:** What is social justice and how it is relevant to international education? Social justice, as a construct, evolved over time to encompass issues of justice, fairness, equity and law becoming centered on ideas of how a society engages in the division and distributions of rewards and burdens (Zadja, Majhanovich, Rust, & Sabina, 2006). Beyond that, social justice is also a call to action, engaging people to seek out their rights and learn to speak truth to power.

When social justice is linked to education, the complexity becomes even more nuanced as one enters the international arena. Geopolitical engagements, economic stratification, religious divisions, gender inequities, and marginalization of cultural groups are just some of the themes impacting the content, delivery and outcomes of education. Learners in almost every country of the world are being educated in systems that have deep-rooted legacies framed around inequitable resources, marginal success, and sustained disempowerment in terms of their path to achieving a high-quality education. This course will seek to untangle the issues surrounding social justice and international education, allowing for a better understanding of how education can be a tool to shape a fairer and more just world for all learners. The course will not seek to provide students with answers, but to assist them in asking their own questions. As an advanced course in the international education series, the course offers students a chance to take a critical look at the role of education and their own place as scholars in the field of international education.

### COURSE DELIVERY

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

## LEARNER OUTCOMES:

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Understand the fundamental ideals and principles of social justice from an international perspective.
2. Speak to the critical components of social injustice and how it affects international education.
3. Demonstrate how economic, social and political development is connected to issues of social injustice in the field of education.
4. Build a base of knowledge around the various factors hindering the equitable delivery of education in certain cultural, national, religious and economic contexts.
5. Explore the nature of hope in narratives of programs, policies and people who are actively seeking to create a more socially just field of education from an international perspective.
6. Collaborate to develop personal principles of social justice as an international educator.
7. Engage with learning to be both an activist and a scholar through deeper understanding of social justice in international education through the preparation of a research paper.

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

International and comparative education is a growing and important field within education and as a result there are a growing number of organizations that are oriented to specific international education audiences, such as the NAFSA: The Association of International Educators, the Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE), which serves international schools; the Institute of International Education (IIE), The Alliance for International Education (AIE) focused on developing partnerships between higher education institutions and international schools; the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), who's purpose is to promote cross-cultural understanding and social development through international education research, policy and practices, and many others. In addition, this course engages with the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) foci on social justice to "to disseminate and promote the use of research knowledge and stimulate interest in research on social justice issues related to education" (AERA website, 2009).

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Said, E. W. (1994). *Representations of the intellectual*. New York, NY: Vintage Books

Stromquist, N. P. & Monkman, K. (2014). *Globalization and Education: Integration and contestation across cultures*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Unterhalter, E. & Carpentier, V. (2010). *Global inequalities and higher education: Whose interests are we serving?* Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Walker, M. & Unterhalter, E. (2007). *Amartya Sen's capability approach and social justice in education*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan

Selected readings from a variety of international education journals (all of these will be posted on Blackboard)

## COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via Blackboard and/or email. Formatting must be consistent with APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) guidelines. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances.

- **Assignments and examinations**

### **Article Club (20 points)**

On the first or second class, students will select one week where they will share two articles of their choice from one of the major IE journals including Comparative Education Review, Compare, Comparative Education, International Journal of Education Development, Gender and Education, Journal for Research in International Education, or select other journals with professors permission based on a particular area of interest around an equity issue around marginalization that could include: gender, ability, sexuality, social-economics, race, caste, class, ethnicity, religion, language or nationality. The student will:

1. Share both articles via BB or in hard copy to the whole class TWO weeks prior to their selected date (4 points).
2. Provide the class with 3 discussion questions that link the articles; facilitate a 30-minute conversation around the articles on the day of the class which will include some sort of activity related to the topic as well (10 points).
3. Classmates will provide narrative feedback to the presenter after the presentation in class (narrative feedback questions will be provided by professor at the third class).
4. Final reflection – a 500 word reflection will be shared with the professor after the presentation that provides an analysis of why these articles were meaningful to you to share with your classmates (2 points), how you felt your facilitation went (2 points), and what sort of lessons you took from the feedback from your classmates (2 points) (total 6 points). **This reflection is due within one week of your presentation to the class.**

### **Book Reflections (4 due throughout the semester, each worth 12 points for a total of 48 points).**

This course is constructed around four pivotal or newer texts that bring a range of ideas to the table around the issues of social injustice in education. The books each take on a philosophical (Said), theoretical (Walker & Unterhalter), methodological (Stromquist & Monkman), or practical (Unterhalter & Carpentier) approach to issues of social injustice and inequity in education. At the culmination of class discussions around each book, students will write a 1000-word reflection that does 4 things:

1. Provide a clear overview of the themes of the book and the overall ideas the authors or editors were trying to address (2.5 points);
2. Two ideas in the book that you would like to learn more about and why (2.5 points);
3. Two ideas in the book you would be interested in challenging and why (2.5 points);
4. Any connection/link between the ideas in the book and your own research interests (2.5 points); and
5. APA, grammar and professional construction of the paper (2 points).

### **Geographic Profile Paper (22 points)**

Students will select a particular social justice issue and set it in the context of a country of their choice, or students will choose a country and select a social justice issue pertinent to that country to explore. Papers will explore the nature of the problem, it's history in the country, the policies that alleviate or sustain the injustice, and it's impact on education. You may initiate this project in one of

two ways – by selecting a social justice issue and placing it in the context of a specific country, or by selecting a country and highlighting a specific social justice issue within the country.

Either way, you will be expected to prepare a paper (between 3,000-4,000 words) that will be graded on five key elements each worth 4.4 points:

- a. Provide a clear and thoughtful analysis of the issue.
- b. Explore the nature of the issue in the chosen country.
- c. Delve into the critiques, constraints, and scope of the issue in your chosen country through the lens of education as well as other relevant lenses.
- d. Present policies, programs, and practices that might be evident in working to dismantle or elevate the issue – especially through the lens of education.
- e. Offer creative solutions and/or understandings on the nature of the issue and how you might reflect on the future of the issue in the context of your own interest.

- **Other requirements**

### **Attendance and Participation (10 points)**

Class participation is important not only for each individual student’s learning, but for the learning and success of our class as a whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absences, tardiness, or early departure in both on-line and campus class sessions as de facto evidence of non-participation and as a result lower a student’s grade (Mason Catalog 2011-12).

Please note the following attendance and participation policies:

1. Two tardies are equal to one absence, and missing 30% or more of class sessions will result in automatic course failure. For each unexcused absence (a determination made by the instructor) one point will be deducted from your attendance and class participation points up to a total of 15 points.
2. Participants are expected to read the assigned materials, complete on-line activities including pre-session Blackboard assignments, arrive promptly, attend all class meetings for the entire session, and participate in on-line and face-to-face class discussions.
3. If, due to an emergency, you will not be able to participate during a given week of class, please contact the professor as soon as possible. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions/sessions despite attendance from a classmate.

## **GRADING**

### **Course performance evaluation weighting**

Attendance and Participation	10 points
Article Club	20 points
Book Reflections	48 points
Geographic profile paper	22 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

- **Grading policies**

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system; the general rubric is described below. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be

assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must choose to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- “C” level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- “F” level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible

### Grading Scale:

At George Mason University, course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Graduate Courses
A+	100	Satisfactory / Passing
A	94-99	Satisfactory / Passing
A-	90-93	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	85-89	Satisfactory / Passing
B	80-84	Satisfactory / Passing
C	70-79	Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education
F	<69	Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

### Professional Dispositions

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

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

## Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
<b>Historical and Theoretical Perspectives</b>		
<b>WEEK 1</b> <b>August 29</b> <b>ONLINE</b>	<b>Course Introduction</b> Course introduction instructions will be posted online by August 24 <sup>th</sup> for completion by September 1. The role of the intellectual in education	Opening Assessment Said, Chapters 1-3
<b>WEEK 2</b> <b>September 5</b>	The role of the intellectual as a social justice figure	Said, Chapters 4-6
<b>WEEK 3</b> <b>September 12</b>	Education and Capabilities	<b>Book Reflection 1 – due</b> Walker and Unterhalter, Chapters 1-3
<b>WEEK 4</b> <b>September 19</b>	A deeper look at capabilities, education and social justice	Walker and Unterhalter, Chapters 4-6
<b>WEEK 5</b> <b>September 26</b>	Applications of capabilities and social justice	Walker and Unterhalter, Chapters 7-9
<b>WEEK 6</b> <b>October 3</b>	Beyond capabilities	Walker and Unterhalter, Chapters 10-12 <b>Book Reflection 2 – Due</b>
<b>October 10</b>	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS	
<b>Week 7</b> <b>October 17</b>	The role of globalization as social injustice	Stromquist and Monkman, Chapters 1-4
<b>WEEK 9</b> <b>October 24</b>	Methodological issues to consider	Stromquist and Monkman, Chapters 5-8
<b>WEEK 10</b> <b>October 31</b> <b>ONLINE</b>	Sector Analysis social justice and Education	Stromquist and Monkman, Chapters 9-12
<b>WEEK 11</b> <b>November 7</b>	Impacts of globalization on education	Stromquist and Monkman, Chapters 13-18 <b>Book Reflection 3 – Due</b>
<b>WEEK 12</b> <b>November 14</b>	Mapping inequities in higher education	Unterhalter and Carpentier, Chapters 1-3
<b>Week 13</b> <b>November 21</b>	Dimensions of inequity in higher education	Unterhalter and Carpentier, Chapters 4-7
<b>WEEK 14</b> <b>November 28</b>	Struggles for equality	Unterhalter and Carpentier, Chapters 8-11 <b>Book Reflection 4 – Due</b>
<b>Week 15</b> <b>December 5</b>	Wrapping up	<b>Geographic Profile paper due</b>

## Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and 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/>.

## Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

## Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk2ohelp@gmu.edu](mailto:tk2ohelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.