

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Division of Elementary, Literacy and Secondary Education**

EDUC 300.B01 – Introduction to Teaching  
3 Credits, Summer 2018

Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30-7:10 p.m. Thompson Hall L003 – Fairfax Campus

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites:** None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Introduction to educational issues; not applicable in graduate-level teacher education programs. Examines roles of teacher, nature of American schools, and potential contributions of students.

**Course Overview**

This course is designed to introduce students to teaching as a career, explore historical and current issues in education, practice developing and enacting lessons/activities, and hone critical reflective skills as they relate to the development of a teaching self.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course includes a variety of teaching and learning approaches: whole and small group discussions, text-based/multi-media interaction with course materials, interactive and full-body engagement activities, individual and group reflective practices, collaborative learning groups, workshop approaches, online discussions and activities, and instructor-led and student-led lessons/activities.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Describe in broad strokes the nature of U.S. schools and some of the issues, challenges, and rewards of teaching and learning throughout history and today.
2. Discuss multiple perspectives regarding the role of the teacher, goals of education and schools, and teacher effectiveness.

3. Discuss and critically reflect on the role of student ideas and learning needs in relationship to standards and curricula.
4. Explain and demonstrate important elements of lesson/activity planning and the enactment of multiple modes of instruction, assessment, and ways to differentiate based on student needs.
5. Reflect on professionalism, intellectualism, personal and professional growth, and potential to make meaningful contributions to the field of education.
6. Begin to formulate a philosophy of teaching drawing from readings, class discussion and activities, and critical reflection on self.

## **Professional Standards Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)**

Students will be introduced to the following professional standards:

### **Standard 1: Subject Matter**

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

### **Standard 2: Student Learning**

The teacher understands how children and youth learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.

### **Standard 3: Diverse Learners**

The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.

### **Standard 4: Instructional Strategies**

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

### **Standard 5: Learning Environment**

The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

### **Standard 6: Communication**

The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and interaction in the classroom.

## **Standard 7: Planning Instruction**

The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

## **Standard 8: Assessment**

The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.

## **Standard 9: Reflection and Personal Development**

The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parent, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

## **Standard 10: Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships**

The teacher communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support students' learning and well-being.

## **Required Text**

Nieto, S. (Ed.). (2015). *Why we teach now*. New York: Teachers College Press

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

### **Assignments and/or Examinations**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
Class Participation/Written Reflections after Each Class	Ongoing	25
Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Education Project	June 19	15
Current Education Topic Group Presentation	June 28	10
Lesson/Activity Plan	Draft: Final: July 12, 17, or 19	5
Enacted Lesson/Activity	July 12, 17, or 19	15
We Teach Who We Are Presentation	July 26	30
	Total	100

\*See end of syllabus for a detailed description of all assignments and rubrics

\*\*No late work will be accepted unless arrangements have been made with instructor

### Grading

A+ = 99-100	B+ = 88-89	C+ = 78-79
A = 93-96	B = 83-87	C = 73-77
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C = 70-72
D = 60-69	F = 0-59	

### Professional Dispositions

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

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

### Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due	Reflection Due by Midnight On
June 5	Course Overview Introduction to Teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why teach?</li> <li>• The self who teaches: reflections on identity and integrity</li> </ul>	Read Through the Syllabus  Bring Blank Journal or Notebook	Wed, 6/6
June 7	Nature of American Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has been, what is, what could be</li> <li>• What does it mean to be well educated?</li> <li>• Lessons from your past teachers</li> </ul>	Nieto (2015) p. 1-20	Sat, 6/8
June 12	Learning Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building trust and community</li> <li>• The role of care</li> <li>• Classroom management</li> </ul>	Inspired Issue Brief: Relationship-Based Discipline  Reeve: Supporting Student Autonomy	Wed, 6/13
June 14	Student Learning and Subject Matter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing student learning needs and interests with curriculum requirements and standards</li> <li>• Creating space for wonder</li> </ul>	Nieto (2015) p. 21-62	Sat, 6/16

June 19	<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity markers, social structures, and relationships to learning and schools</li> <li>• Students' interests, everyday lives, ways of being as resources</li> </ul>	<p>Nieto (2015) p. 63-96</p> <p><b>Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Education Project Due</b></p>	Wed, 6/20
June 21	<p>Instructional Strategies and Differentiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beyond transmission models</li> <li>• Reflective, flexible, responsive pedagogy</li> </ul>	<p>View, read, and/or listen to peer projects: Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Education</p> <p>Tomlinson &amp; Allan: Understanding Differentiated Instruction</p>	Sat, 6/23
June 26	<p>Tools for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of technology</li> <li>• Role of materials</li> <li>• Role of texts</li> </ul>	Nieto (2015) p. 97-127	Wed, 6/27
June 28	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning as a continuum</li> <li>• The role of feedback</li> </ul> <p>Group Presentations and Feedback</p>	<b>Group Presentations: Current Education Topic</b>	Sat, 6/30
July 3 NO CLASS	NO CLASS – Holiday Break	NO CLASS – Holiday Break	
July 5	Planning Instruction Workshop I	Nieto (2015) p. 129-157	Sat, 7/7
July 10	Planning Instruction Workshop II	<b>Draft Lesson Plan Due – All Groups</b> Bring copies for everyone	Wed, 7/11
July 12	Lessons and Feedback	<b>Final Lesson Plan Due, Enact Lesson – Group 1</b>	Sat, 7/14
July 17	Lessons and Feedback	Nieto (2015) p. 159-210 <b>Final Lesson Plan Due, Enact Lesson – Group 2</b>	Wed, 7/18
July 19	Lessons and Feedback	<b>Final Lesson Plan Due, Enact Lesson – Group 3</b>	Sat, 7/21
July 24	<p>Ongoing Reflection and Personal/Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher as critical thinker, intellectual, researcher</li> <li>• Practicing self-care</li> </ul>	Nieto (2015) p. 211-254	Wed, 7/25
July 26	We Teach Who We Are Presentations and Celebration	<b>We Teach Who We Are Presentations</b>	

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

## **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/>.

## **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- 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 turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.**

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@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/> .**

## Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics:

### **Class Participation/Written Reflections after Each Class** (25 points)

Students are expected to be fully engaged and present to be successful in this course. This means attending all classes, arriving on time, fully engaging in class activities and discussions, and staying until the end of class. **Students will keep a hand-written, ungraded journal/notebook** for personal reflective purposes (jotting thoughts, ideas, wonders, drawings, etc.) and for various activities throughout class. Entries will be useful for the final We Teach Who We Are presentation on the last day of class as well as raw material for the electronic journal submissions detailed below.

**Students will write an electronic journal submission/reflection after each class** to be submitted on Blackboard by the date and time noted on the syllabus and journal section of Blackboard. These journal entries should demonstrate critical reflection on readings, class discussions/activities, and the development of ideas regarding self and developing philosophy in relation to teaching. **A prompt will be made available on Blackboard by 8:00 pm following each class period.**

Approximate length of each entry: 500 words.

**Due dates for each entry noted on syllabus.**

Rubric: Class Participation and Reflections

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
Attendance – present, on time, stays until end of class	_____/5
Engagement in discussions and activities – active participant, and also knows when to step back, practice active listening, and encourage others to participate	_____/5
Written entries demonstrate critical reflection on material, self, and teaching philosophy and regularly meet length requirement	_____/15
Total	_____/25

### **Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Education Project** (15 points)

What is the role and impact of teachers and teaching in our society? What are the overall goals of education? Are those goals being met? What is the purpose of school? Who decides? How are teaching and schools/education portrayed in the media? For this project, students will act as detectives and/or researchers to uncover various perspectives on teaching and U.S. education. Students will conduct interviews and gather information from multiple sources and create a project/representation of what they find out as well as reflect on the implications for their own future practice. A minimum of **three** brief interviews\* (teacher, administrator, politician, your neighbor, etc.) and **two** additional sources (movies or television programs about teachers or schools, teacher blogs, education websites, etc.) are required. The method by which this synthesized information will be made accessible to the class is only limited by your imagination. Possibilities include: recorded dramatic performance, website, video, screenplay, blog, narrative, brochure, newspaper article, recorded newscast, short story, documentary, recorded interpretive dance, narrated Powerpoint/Prezi, visual art piece(s), music ensemble, collection of poems, podcast, recorded puppet show, etc. Projects will be evaluated on thoroughness, thoughtfulness, creativity, communication of multiple perspectives, and inclusion of a personal reflection on implications.

\*We will cover important ethical aspects of interviewing and reporting out findings in class.

**Due Tuesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> 4:30 pm**

Rubric: Multiple Perspectives on Teaching and Education Project

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
Thoroughness: portrays multiple perspectives on teaching and education by incorporating a minimum of 3 interviews and 2 additional sources.	_____/5
Demonstrates creativity: uses an interesting or unique medium or approach that provokes emotional/aesthetic connection to the content with potential to stimulate the audience to think differently or more complexly about the topic.	_____/5
Thoughtfulness: Includes an element of personal reflection/synthesis communicating the implications for future practice.	_____/5
Total	_____/15

**Current Education Topic Discussion/Activity** (10 points)

There are plenty of hot topics and debates happening in education all the time: teachers going on strike, guns and schools, the rise of charter schools, test-and-standards-driven culture, teacher evaluations tied to student performance, disappearing recess and play, etc. Over the first several class periods, we will work as a group to collect some of these topics and then form smaller groups based on shared interests. Your group will then plan and lead the class in a 20 minute interactive discussion or activity based on your chosen topic. Your group will also prepare a one-page handout of information for the class, including a list of references (minimum of three sources APA style), provocative questions, and potential solutions for consideration.

**Presentation Date: Thursday, June 28<sup>th</sup>**

Rubric: Current Education Topic Discussion/Activity

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
Presentation was clear, informative, interactive, and thought provoking.	_____/5
Presentation included a useful handout with a reference list in APA format with at least 3 sources and included provocative questions and potential solutions to promote expansive thinking.	_____/5
Total	_____/10

**Lesson/Activity Plan** (5 points)

Being thoroughly prepared for each school day is a critical aspect of teaching well. To gain exposure to and practice the planning process, we will workshop elements of lesson/activity planning together based on what has been covered in the course thus far. You will create a basic plan for a 30 min. interactive lesson/activity for the grade level and content area of your choice. The lesson/activity plan template is posted in Blackboard. Your final lesson/activity plan should include the following elements: a standards-based objective, a student-centered lesson/activity, time allotments for each part of the lesson, a plan for differentiation and flexibility, potential questions to prompt student thinking, a list of possible ways students may respond to the lesson and your possible responses, an assessment plan, and a summarizing element.

**Draft due: Tuesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> 4:30 pm**



**Final Lesson Plan due: Thursday, July 12<sup>th</sup> - OR Tuesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> - OR Thursday, July 19<sup>th</sup>**

Rubric: Lesson/Activity Plan

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
All elements of the description are included in the lesson plan, and it is clear that the student put effort into thinking through each element and made revisions based on feedback	_____/5

**Enacted Lesson/Activity** (10 points)

The goals of enacting your planned lesson are to get a feel for what it is like to teach, including making in-the-moment adjustments based on student responses/needs and teachable moments, and receiving peer feedback and support during a reflective debrief. You are expected to incorporate elements of instruction, assessment, and differentiation we have discussed and read about throughout the course thus far as well as participate in critical self-reflection during the debrief after the lesson.

**Presented on: Thursday, July 12<sup>th</sup> - OR Tuesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> - OR Thursday, July 19<sup>th</sup>**

Rubric: Enacted Lesson/Activity

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
The student made attempts to incorporate elements of instruction, assessment, and differentiation covered throughout this course. Adjustments were made in response to student needs and teachable moments that arose during the lesson/activity.	_____/7
The student participated in critical self-reflection during the debrief session, acknowledging things that went well and also considering ideas about what she/he might try or do differently next time.	_____/3
Total	_____/10

**We Teach Who We Are Presentation** (30 points)

*Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.* - Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*

*Education as the practice of freedom affirms healthy self-esteem in students as it promotes their capacity to be aware and live consciously. It teaches them to reflect and act in ways that further self-actualization, rather than conformity to the status quo.* – bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*

On the last day of class, you will present and narrate a 10-15 min. visual representation (Powerpoint, Prezi, etc.) of your journey of critical thinking and reflection on self, education, and developing teaching philosophy through participation in this course. Drawing on our readings, class activities and discussions, your previous assignments, your handwritten journal entries, class reflections, feedback from peers, and intensive critical self-reflection, you will present what you have learned about yourself and your potential contributions to American society as a teacher in the future. The presentation should include a minimum of 10 slides depicting your journey, including one on your current teaching philosophy and one on your future plans given what you have learned about yourself, children, and the landscape of education today. These presentations should demonstrate considerable effort, creativity, thoroughness, and substantial critical reflection on the impact of this course on your development as a future teacher.

**Presentations on Thursday, July 26<sup>th</sup>**

Rubric: We Teach Who We Are Presentation

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
Connects readings, class assignments and activities, peer and instructor feedback, and previous reflections into presentation in a thorough and thoughtful manner	_____/10
Uses at least 10 slides to depict a detailed, critically reflective account of personal journey through the course	_____/10
Includes a thoughtful current teaching philosophy and depiction of future plans based on learning in EDUC 300	_____/10
<b>Total</b>	_____/30