

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

EDUC 300.001 – Introduction to Teaching
3 Credits, Spring 2019
Tuesdays 7:20-10:00 p.m. Peterson 1106 – 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

Assignment	Due Date	Total Points
Class Participation/Written Reflections after Each Class	Ongoing	25
Current Education Topic Group Presentation	February 26	10
Lesson/Activity Plan	Draft: April 2 Final: April 9 or 16	5
Enacted Lesson/Activity	April 9 or 16	15
Field Observation Project	April 23	20
We Teach Who We Are Presentation	April 30	25
	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 = 93-98	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
January 22	Course Overview Introduction to Teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why teach? • The self who teaches: reflections on identity and integrity 	Read Through the Syllabus Bring Blank Journal or Notebook	Thursday, 1/24
January 29	Nature of American Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been, what is, what could be • What does it mean to be well educated? • Lessons from your past teachers 	Review 3 online sources on the history of education and/or teaching in the US Nieto (2015) p. 1-20	Thursday, 1/31
February 5	Learning Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust and community • The role of care • Classroom management 	Inspired Issue Brief: Relationship-Based Discipline Reeve: Supporting Student Autonomy	Thursday, 2/7
February 12	Student Learning and Subject Matter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing student learning needs and interests with curriculum requirements and standards • Creating space for wonder 	Nieto (2015) p. 21-62	Thursday, 2/14

February 19	Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity markers, social structures, and relationships to learning and schools • Students' interests, everyday lives, ways of being as resources 	Nieto (2015) p. 63-96	Thursday, 2/21
February 26	Instructional Strategies and Differentiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond transmission models • Reflective, flexible, responsive pedagogy 	Group Presentations: Current Education Topic Tomlinson & Allan: Understanding Differentiated Instruction	Thursday, 2/28
March 5	Tools for Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of technology • Role of materials • Role of texts 	Nieto (2015) p. 97-127	Thursday, 3/7
March 12	NO CLASS – Spring Break	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
March 19	Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning as a continuum • The role of feedback 	Watch and jot down notes/questions on three videos on assessment from The Teaching Channel: http://www.teachingchannel.org	Thursday, 3/21
March 26	Planning Instruction Workshop 1	Nieto (2015) p. 129-157	Thursday, 3/28
April 2	Online Class – We will not meet in person. Post your lesson plan draft on Blackboard and provide feedback to your peers	Online Class - We will not meet in person. Draft Lesson Plan Due – post to Blackboard and provide feedback to one another	No reflection this week
April 9	Lessons and Feedback	Nieto (2015) p. 159-210 Final Lesson Plan Due, Enact Lesson – Group 1	Thursday, 4/11
April 16	Lessons and Feedback	Final Lesson Plan Due, Enact Lesson – Group 2	Thursday, 4/18
April 23	Ongoing Reflection and Personal/Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher as critical thinker, intellectual, researcher • Practicing self-care 	Nieto (2015) p. 211-254 Share Fieldwork Projects/Reflections	Thursday, 4/25
April 30	We Teach Who We Are Presentations and Celebration	We Teach Who We Are Presentations	Thursday, 5/2

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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.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 in the discussion section of Blackboard. These 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 9:00 am the next morning following each class period.** Approximate length of each entry: 500 words.

Due dates for each entry noted on syllabus.

Rubric: Class Participation and Reflections

Element	Points Allotted
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

Field Experience: Observations, Teacher Interview, and Synthesis Project (20 points)

All students in this course are required to complete 15 hours of field experience in a local school. The registration materials and all details about the field experience placement can be found at <https://cehd.gmu.edu/epo/field-experience>. It is important that you register for this experience as soon as possible after enrolling in this course. The Spring 2019 online field experience request form will open on Friday, January 18th. If you have any questions, please contact fieldexp@gmu.edu.

Students will observe classes, interview a teacher, and synthesize their learning through a final product presented to peers. The focus of the observations will be emergent and evolve over time based on student wonders, class discussions, and spontaneous events witnessed. These foci will in turn inform the topics to discuss in teacher interviews, as well as the method of sharing findings with peers. The rubric for this project will be a live document developed collaboratively in class.

Final project sharing: April 23rd

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: February 26th

Rubric: Current Education Topic Discussion/Activity

Element	Points Allotted
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, April 2nd

Final Lesson Plan due: April 9th or April 16th

Rubric: Lesson/Activity Plan

Element	Points Allotted
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: April 9th or April 16th

Rubric: Enacted Lesson/Activity

Elements	Points Allotted
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 (25 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 26th

Rubric: We Teach Who We Are Presentation

Element	Points Allotted
Uses at least 10 slides to depict a detailed, critically reflective account of personal journey through the course	_____/5
Connects readings, class assignments and activities, peer and instructor feedback, and previous reflections into presentation in a thorough and thoughtful manner	_____/10
Includes a thoughtful current teaching philosophy and depiction of future plans based on learning in EDUC 300	_____/10
Total	_____/25