

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development Education Policy**  
EDPO 303 (002) and GOVT 319 (007) – Politics of American Education  
3 Credits, Fall 2022  
Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10 p.m., Innovation Hall 137, Fairfax Campus

**Faculty**

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Office Hours: By appointment

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**University Catalog Course Description**

Focuses on the study of the American political system. Explores how interactions between various levels and branches of government affect education. Informs students studying the American political system and students interested in careers in education.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to:

- understand and explain the relevant connection between education and the political process in the United States
- understand and explain how authority for education is dispersed among local, state, and federal governments
- understand and discuss key issues in education policy at all levels of government and the different and often competing philosophies that inform education policy decisions
- acquire the background and ability to think critically about public education issues relevant to all students, families, and others
- enhance the ability to communicate views in various formats

**Course Content**

*Required Text*

Ornstein, A. C., Levine, D. U., Gutek, G., & Vocke, D. E. (2016). *Foundations of education*. Cengage learning.

*\*Additional instructional resources may be assigned as needed to enhance course content.*

**Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor. All due dates will be announced well in advance.

**Health-related Attendance Policy Adjustment**

Anyone who anticipates missing class for health reasons must send me advance notice via email if possible.

**Preparation, Positive Relationships, and Appreciation of Diverse Viewpoints**

It is critical that every student comes to class well prepared, ready to interact with classmates, and prepared to ask relevant questions and share perspectives. In this course we assume positive intentions no matter what experiences students might be coming from. In any course associated with public policy there is likely to be a wide range of perspectives. This is good! It allows for rich discussion and opportunities to explore a broad range of opinions. Open mindedness, listening, and a willingness to understand each other are vital to positive outcomes.

**Anti-Racism Statement**

As a member of the George Mason University community, I will work to create an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. I affirm that in this class, faculty and students will work together to interrupt cycles of racism against Black individuals, indigenous people, and other people of color to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just learning environments for all participants, regardless of racial background. In the class we also seek particularly to welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity,

race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. This is particularly important in a topic such as ours where racial injustice has played such a large role over many decades and in many ways. Our discussions will often touch on the influence of race in education in America, and we can all best learn together by being kind, listening well, and valuing each other's perspectives.

### **Academic Accommodation for a Disability**

Students with varying abilities and needs add a richness to the classroom experience for all. All students are welcomed and encouraged to participate fully and to share any needs, suggestions, and feedback with the professor at any time. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor, and also contact the Office of Disability Services. 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/>).

### **Basic Course Technology Requirements**

Activities and assignments in this course will regularly use the Blackboard learning system, available at <https://mymason.gmu.edu>. Students are required to have regular, reliable access to a computer with an updated operating system (recommended: Windows 10 or Mac OSX 10.13 or higher) and a stable broadband Internet connection (cable modem, DSL, satellite broadband, etc., with a consistent 1.5 Mbps [megabits per second] download speed or higher. You can check your speed settings using the speed test on this website.) 8 Last revised June 30, 2021 Activities and assignments in this course may occasionally use web-conferencing software (Blackboard Collaborate / Zoom). In addition to the requirements above, students are encouraged to have a device with a functional camera and microphone. In an emergency, students can connect through a telephone call, but video connection is the expected norm. Please plan to bring a laptop or tablet to class regularly if possible. In-class activities will use them on occasion.

### **Course Materials and Student Privacy**

In-person and virtual synchronous class sessions may be recorded for the benefit of the instructor and enrolled students. These materials will be stored on Blackboard, or another secured, private site, accessible only to the students enrolled in the course. Video recordings of class meetings that are shared only with the instructors and students officially enrolled in a class do not violate FERPA or any other privacy expectation. To protect the privacy rights of everyone in the class, they must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

### **Grading**

Please see rubric below for grading scales and assignment expectations. Specific rubrics will be provided for each major assignment as needed. Professional Dispositions Students are expected to always exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>.

### **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/Schar Policy on Plagiarism**

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the Schar School. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For international students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. Undergraduate Academic Policies and Forms | Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University ([gmu.edu](http://gmu.edu)) /

#### Resources

GMU Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

GMU Libraries <http://library.gmu.edu/>

GMU Counseling and Psychological Services <http://caps.gmu.edu/>

GMU Emergency Preparedness Guides <https://ehs.gmu.edu/emergencymanagement/plans-guides/>

### **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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructionaltechnology-support-for-students/>.

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