

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Elementary Education Program

EDUC 200.001 – Introduction to Education: Teaching, Learning and Schools

3 Credits, Fall 2022

Tuesdays | 4:30 pm -7:10 pm

Music & Theater Building | Room 1002 | Fairfax Campus

Instructor: Sophia Wells-Williams, M.Ed.
Office Hours: By Appointment via Zoom
Office Location: Thompson Hall 1800, Fairfax Campus
Office Phone: Please email
Email Address: swellswi@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

University Catalog Course Description: Introduces educational issues related to learning, schooling, and teaching. Examines roles of teachers and nature of American schools and learners. **Requires 15 hours of school-based field experience during the course.**

Course Overview: This course is designed to introduce students to the foundations of our system of American public education. Students will reflect critically upon and critique their own educational experiences and articulate their own beliefs and values about teaching, learning, and schooling. Students will also examine current and historical roles, expectations, stereotypes, and characterizations that define teaching as a profession.

This course fulfills the Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement and addresses the following learning outcomes:

1. Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

Course Delivery Method: This course will be delivered in a face-to-face format. Additionally, one session will be held asynchronously via Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. Face- to-face class sessions will include a variety of teaching and learning approaches: whole and small group discussions, text-based/multimedia 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: This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Explain how individuals, groups, and institutions are impacted by the educational system.
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs related to teaching and learning.
3. Describe U.S. schools and some of the issues, challenges, and rewards of teaching and learning, and the roles that teachers play within them.
4. Identify the qualities and dispositions of effective teachers.
5. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, principles, terminology, and theories to analyze from multiple perspectives the role of the teacher, goals of education and schools, and teacher effectiveness.
6. Discuss and critically reflect on the role of student ideas and learning needs in relationship to standards and curricula.
7. Reflect on professionalism, intellectualism, personal and professional growth, and potential to make meaningful contributions to the field of education.

Professional Standards: Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Students will be introduced to the INTASC professional standards: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/licensing/intasc.pdf>

Required Texts:

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

Additional required readings posted on Blackboard

Additional Material:

Journal or notebook for in-class assignments and fieldwork observations

Course Performance Evaluation: Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor. Blackboard will be used to upload assignments. All work should be submitted on time according to the deadlines in this syllabus and on Blackboard. If absent, assignments are still due via Blackboard on the due date. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Course Assignments

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage
Attendance and Class Participation	Ongoing	15%
Weekly Reflection	Ongoing	15%
Education in the News Facilitated Discussion	Ongoing Sept. 13- Nov. 8	15%
Educational Autobiography	September 6	5%
Interview with Teachers and/or Learner Essay	Submit Topic- September 20 Share Questions- October 4 Draft Essay- November 8 Final Essay- November 15	20%
Preparing to Enter the Profession Portfolio	Saturday, December 3	30%

Detailed descriptions of assignments and rubrics are at the end of the syllabus.

Requirements

1. **Be present and prompt-** Class begins promptly at 4:30 pm. Consistent, on-time attendance is expected, as a portion of your grade is based on participation. Missing multiple classes will result in significant point deductions on the final grade. Arriving late to class will also result in a deduction of participation points.
2. **Participate-** Active participation is a critical component of the course; this means listening and contributing to the discussion. If you are uncomfortable talking in class, one idea that may help is to think of a comment or question prior to coming to class that you would be willing to share. Everyone should have the goal of making at least one contribution (comment or question) during each week's class. Finally, please do not use your phone to text or for other purposes during class. Your engagement in the course is crucial for your learning and the learning of your peers and is a large part of your class participation grade.
3. **Proofread-** Correct spelling, grammar, and format are essential to the success of your written assignments. Pay careful attention to proofreading, as it will be part of the grade on all written assignments. **All papers are expected to be double-spaced, with 1" margins, and in 12-point Times New Roman font.** APA format is expected. If you do not have a 7th Edition APA manual, the OWL at Purdue is a quality resource. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Grading

Grade	Percentage	Grade Points
A	93-100	4.00

A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D	60-69	1.00
F	<59	0.00

A course grade of C or below is not satisfactory for an initial license course.

Professional Dispositions: Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. For further information, see <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule

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

Week	Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments due before Class	Weekly Reflection
1	August 23	Course Overview Community	<u>Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the syllabus carefully 	Wednesday, Aug. 24 by 11:59 pm
2 Unit 1: What comprises effective teaching?	August 30	Attributes of a “good” teacher	Readings and Videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part I – Introduction & Chapter 1 Read ARTICLE: Ripley (2010) 	Wednesday, Aug. 31 by 11:59 pm
3	September 6	Learning Environments: Classroom Management and Building Relationships	<u>Readings and Videos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part II (Select one chapter to read) Read ARTICLE: <i>Responsive Classroom</i> Approach to Discipline Read ARTICLE: Restorative Justice in School: An Overview <u>Assignments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Autobiography Due 	Wednesday, Sept. 7 by 11:59 pm

4	September 13	Teachers' Identity of Self and Engagement with Others	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part III (Select one chapter to read) • Read ARTICLE: DuFour (2004) • Read ARTICLE: Tutt (2021) <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated Discussion- Group 1 	Wednesday, Sept. 14 by 11:59 pm
5	September 20	InTASC standards for teachers	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part IV (Select one chapter to read) • Watch VIDEO: InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (intro only- stop at 1:07) • Read DOCUMENT: InTASC standards <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated Discussion- Group 2 • Interview with Teachers and/or Learner 	Wednesday, Sept. 21 by 11:59 pm
6 Unit 2: What and how are skills taught?	September 27	Standards-Based Instruction	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part V (Select one chapter to read) • Read ARTICLE: Girod & Girod (2012) • Review WEBSITE: Common Core Standards • Review WEBSITE: VDOE SOL • <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated 	Wednesday, Sept. 28 by 11:59 pm
7	October 4	No Child left Behind (NCLB) & Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part VI (pick one chapter to read) • Read ARTICLE: Dennis (2017) • Watch VIDEO: Behind: No Child Left Behind - An Oral History • Watch VIDEO: ESSA Explained: Inside the New Federal K-12 Law <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated Discussion- Group 4 • Interview with Teachers and/or Learner Essay- Interview Questions 	Wednesday, Oct. 5 by 11:59 pm
No Class Monday classes meet on Tuesday	October 11			

8	October 18	Types and Purposes of Assessments	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Nieto (2015), Part VII-Chapter 24 • Read ARTICLE: Badger & Quely (2017) • Read ARTICLE: Berwick (2019) <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated 	Wednesday, Oct. 19 by 11:59 pm
9 Unit 3: Who are our students?	October 25	Schools and Students: Then and Now	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read WEBSITE: King Jr (1948) • Read ARTICLE: Talebi (2015): begin on page 4 (Education and Teacher Education); read through page 12 • Read ARTICLE: Horn (2021) <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated 	Wednesday, Oct. 26 by 11:59 pm
10	November 1	Educating All Students: Asset View vs. Deficit View and Teaching the Children of Poverty	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Gorski (2008) • Watch VIDEO: Luis Moll Funds of Knowledge • Read ARTICLE: Merrill (2021) <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated Discussion- Group 7 	Wednesday, Nov. 2 by 11:59 pm
11	November 8	Educating All Students: Teaching Diverse Learners and Students with Different Learning Abilities	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Everett (2019) • Read ARTICLE: Ladson-Billings (2011) • Read and watch WEBSITE: IEPs and 504 plans • Read ARTICLE: Kaplan (2011) <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education in the News Facilitated Discussion- Group 8 • Interview with Teachers and/or Learner 	Wednesday, Nov. 9 by 11:59 pm
12	November 15	Engaging and Motivating Students	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: The Role of Motivation in Learning • Read ARTICLE: Parsons et al. (2014) • Watch VIDEO: Robinson (2006) Ted Talk, Do Schools Kill Creativity • Watch VIDEO: Sir Ken Robinson (2013) Ted Talk, How to Escape Education's Death Valley <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Teachers and/or Learner 	Wednesday, Nov. 16 by 11:59 pm

13 Asynchronous	November 22	Teacher Language and its Impact on Students	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE DeWitt (2012) • Read ARTICLE: Nucaro (2017) • Watch VIDEO: Pierson, Ted Talk, Every Kid Need a Champion <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Reflection Discussion Post* 	*Tuesday, Nov. 29 at 4:30 pm
14	November 29	Ongoing Reflection and Professional Development	<p><u>Readings and Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings and Guest Speaker- TBA <p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering the Profession Portfolio due by Saturday, December 3 at 11:59 pm 	Wednesday, Nov. 30 by 11:59 pm

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/> <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 VIA should be directed to 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-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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

Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics

Attendance and Class Participation 15%

Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, participate in all discussions and activities, complete readings and viewings before class, and stay until the end of class. Robust participation is required to receive full participation credit. Students will not receive participation credit for classes they do not attend. Students will keep a hand-written journal/ notebook for personal reflective purposes and for various activities throughout the class.

Attendance and Participation Rubric		
1	2	3
<p>Attendance- Present, either late to class and leaves early without prior notice to the instructor.</p> <p>Active participation- Rarely contributes to large or small groups. Seldom asks questions. Overtalks during discussions and rarely practices active listening.</p> <p>Preparedness- Does not complete any of the readings and viewings prior to class. Does not bring draft assignments to class.</p>	<p>Attendance- Present, either late to class or leaves early without prior notice to the instructor.</p> <p>Active participation- Contributes to small group discussions but seldom speaks in large group discussions. Asks and answers questions when solicited.</p> <p>Preparedness- Completes a portion of the readings and viewings prior to class. Brings incomplete draft assignments to class.</p>	<p>Attendance- Present, on time, and stays until the end of class. Communicates professionally with instructor in case of emergency or to prearrange absence or tardy</p> <p>Active participation- Contributes to large and small group discussions, asks and answers relevant questions- but also knows when to step back and practice active listening and encourage others to participate</p> <p>Preparedness- Comes to class fully prepared by completing readings, viewings, and draft assignments prior to class.</p>

Weekly Reflection 15%

Due: Each week by 11:59 pm the evening following the class

Students will complete a weekly reflection that is related to the topic of that night's class. The response should connect the assigned readings, videos, and class discussion as well as utilize reflective strategies and critical thinking. Weekly Reflections will be submitted as a discussion post on Blackboard. Students who do not attend the class can still complete the exit ticket for that week but will not receive full credit as they cannot make connections to the class discussion.

The prompt will be made available on Blackboard after each class session. The reflection must be posted by 11:59 pm the evening following each class. Due dates for each entry are noted on the syllabus.

Approximate length of each entry: 250-300 words

Weekly Reflection Rubric				
0.5	1	1.5	2	3
An exit ticket will receive this score if the submitter was not present in class and if it meets the requirements of a 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is thoughtful but not as well-developed as a whole• Responds to most parts of each question• Makes few connections between class activities and assigned readings and viewings and/or connections are not clear.• Contains multiple spelling and grammatical errors	An exit ticket will receive this score if the submitter was not present in class and if it meets the requirements of a 2 or 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is thoughtful and thorough, though some thinking might need extension• Responds to all parts of each question• Makes some connection between class activities and assigned readings and viewings, though connection may be implicit• Contains some errors but is generally proofread for spelling and grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is thoughtful and thorough• Responds to all parts of each question• Makes clear and explicit connections between class activities and assigned readings and viewings• May contain minor errors but is overall proofread for spelling and grammar

Education in the News Facilitated Discussion 15%

Due: September 13- November 8 (one group per week)

Part of becoming a professional educator is reading and seeking out new information to become more aware of what is going on in the field of education. There are plenty of hot topics and debates happening in education all the time, including teacher shortage, school safety, the rise of charter schools, standardized testing, social-emotional learning, and technology in schools.

To facilitate the discussion:

- Students will form interest groups by topic (3-4 students) and select a date to facilitate the discussion.
- Your group will **locate two news articles** that pertain to teaching/teachers, learning/learners, or schools... anything relevant to the field of education.
- Your group will then **plan and lead the class in a 25-30 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), thoughts on the major issues being discussed, provocative questions, and potential solutions for consideration.
- **Your group will post links to your articles on Blackboard at least one week prior to your discussion, so your peers can complete the reading.**

Education in the News Facilitated Discussion Rubric	
Element	Points Allotted
Presentation was clear, informative, included interactive discussion, and was thought-provoking.	____/ 25
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.	____/ 20
Total	____/ 45

Educational Autobiography 5%

Due: September 6th

In 500-750 words, **reflect on your educational journey thus far** and how it has **impacted your views of education, teaching, learning, and schools**. Address the following:

- **An overview of your educational experiences.** Consider the following items:
 - The nature of the communities where you lived while attending elementary and secondary school
 - The size and type of school (public, charter, private, homeschool, etc.)
 - The composition of the students, staff, and administrators (think about the demographics including racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, and social class diversity)
 - Your parents/guardians and family’s attitude toward school
- **Highlight significant events, teachers, or experiences you have encountered as a learner.** Describe these events in detail, telling what happened, how you felt about the event, and the attitude it engendered in you. Consider the following items (as applicable)
 - Significant positive and/or negative teacher role models in elementary and secondary schools
 - Significant positive school experiences (What happened? How did you feel? What was the result or consequence?)
 - Significant negative school experiences (What happened? How did you feel? What was the result or consequence?)
 - Significant events related to participation in your peer group(s)

- Any significant events related to school as an academic experience, a social experience, a cultural experience, a social class (SES) experience, or a religious experience

(Adapted from purdue.edu)

Educational Autobiography Rubric	
Element	Points Allotted
Thoroughness: Information is organized, well-constructed, and relates to the main topic.	____/ 6
Thoughtfulness: Demonstrates thoughtful reflection and critical analysis	____/ 6
Mechanics: Correct grammar and mechanics show attention to details and professional communication skills	____/ 3
Total	____/ 15

Interview with Teachers and/or Learner Paper 20%

Due: Draft: November 8th | Final: November 15th

You will choose an educational topic of interest to you. It could be anything from school choice, assessment, teacher burnout, or student motivation. The list goes on and on. You will interview two people (teachers and/or learner), asking for their opinion. The two people could be 1) two teachers or 2) a teacher and a learner (i.e., a student of any age level).

Prior to the interview, **please submit your topic by September 20th**. Additionally, you will create a list of 6-8 open-ended questions around your educational topic. For example, if you wanted to know more about the K-12 curriculum, a sample question could be asking a teacher: "How do you decide what to teach in your class?" **Be prepared to share your list of questions with a peer in class on October 4th**.

During the interview, take detailed notes. It is highly recommended that you record the interview. Please obtain permission from the interviewee before recording. Ask follow-up questions that delve further into the essential issue – and you might learn about a topic that wasn't your original focus. Avoid asking a series of disconnected questions that don't lead anywhere or fail to give you important insight. Plan to speak with the teacher you interview for about 30-45 minutes. The length of time spent with the learner depends on their age.

When you have completed the interviews, write a **3-page analysis** about what you learned about your topic in terms of the interview and your knowledge from class, **using at least three citations**. The citations can be from class readings but do not have to be – feel free to research more if you would like. Note: Do **not simply** write what the teachers/learner said... tell what ***you learned about***

the topic. Your paper should make clear connections between what was learned in the interviews and what you learned in class.

Use at least **3** citations, either from class readings, books, or your own research. Include a reference list and an appendix of your interview questions at the end of the paper. (You do not need to include the interview answers – just the questions.)

Interview with Teachers and/or Learner Essay Rubric	
Element	Points Allotted
Thoroughness: Portrays multiple perspectives on the educational topic. Use three or more citations. Includes reference list and an appendix with interview questions.	____/ 25
Thoughtfulness: Includes an element of personal reflection/ synthesis communicating the implications for future practice.	____/ 25
Mechanics: (i.e., capitalization, punctuation and spelling, proper APA formatting) Correct grammar and mechanics show attention to detail and professional communication skills	____/ 10
Total	____/ 60

Preparing to Enter the Profession Portfolio 30%

Due: Saturday, December 3 at 11:59 pm

The items in this portfolio will help you prepare to enter the education major of your choice. Additional information will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Education Majors will complete the following:

Meet with licensure specialist (9 points)

- Attend a CEHD advising appointment with the endorsement advisor or undergraduate advisor.

School-based experience reflections (27 points)

- During the semester you will conduct fieldwork in different educational settings (or listen to guest speakers).
- The purposes of this fieldwork are to:
 - connect the goals of the course to classroom/school practice
 - gain exposure to a variety of classroom/school communities
 - promote critical, self-reflection about teaching, learning and schools

- Use a journal to log your thoughts during and after each classroom observation.
Always consider:
 - What did you observe?
 - Why do you think it is significant?
 - How will it impact you as a future teacher/learner?
- Guiding questions will be provided.

Dispositions Self-Assessment (27 points)

- Using the [CEHD dispositions](#) create a document that outlines your strengths and areas of improvement for each of the dispositions. Additional information will be provided in class.

Why Teach? Vision Statement Draft (27 points)

- One of the most important questions to ask yourself as you consider entering the education profession is “How will my students be different for having been in my class?” Expectations are so important in education and in order to clearly state those expectations as well as hold students responsible for meeting them you must spend some time “visioning” what your classroom and your teaching will look like. You will craft a draft of your vision statement using the information provided in classes.

Non-Education Majors will complete the following:

School-based experience reflections (27 points)

- During the semester you will conduct fieldwork in different educational settings (or listen to guest speakers).
- The purposes of this fieldwork are to:
 - connect the goals of the course to classroom/school practice
 - gain exposure to a variety of classroom/school communities
 - promote critical, self-reflection about teaching, learning and schools
- Use a journal to log your thoughts during and after each classroom observation.
Always consider:
 - What did you observe?
 - Why do you think it is significant?
 - How will it impact you as a future teacher/learner?
- Guiding questions will be provided.

Dispositions Self-Assessment (27 points)

- Using the [CEHD dispositions](#) create a document that outlines your strengths and areas of improvement for each of the dispositions. Additional information will be provided in class.

Teaching and Learning Paper in Today's Schools (36 points)

- In a 3-5 page paper, discuss social and/or cultural constructs influencing US schools today OR explore a course topic further.
- Draw from course material to explain the changes in today's schools related to teaching and learning.
- Use a minimum of 3 references.