EDF 3604.522  3 credit hours  
Schools & Society  
Fall 2014

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Office Hours: Please email for a time most convenient to you.
I am typically in the office Mon-Fri, 9-4:30, though I may be at a meeting.
Technology Help: http://usfsm.edu/information-commons/student-resources/, http://usfsm.edu/technology-services/finding-help/, Phone: 941-359-4350; email: computing@sar.usf.edu
Writing support and tutoring: http://usfsm.edu/information-commons/tutoring/

PREREQUISITES: None

“Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.” ~ Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this section of EDF 3604, you will learn how to think critically about the institution of public education and social, political, economic, and corporate influences that affect its purposes. Critical pedagogy is about questioning statements and beliefs that we typically take for granted. It is also about taking contexts into account as we make judgments about issues. Take, for example, this statement: Standardized tests inform us about students who are understanding the curriculum and those who are not.” Really? What about bright students who have test anxiety? Students who grew up disadvantaged and are not familiar with the tennis jargon in a reading passage? What about those who are great at memorization, but do not comprehend what they memorize? This is the way in which we will approach challenges to the US educational system.

Critical pedagogy is one way to critique US education. I have chosen it because you are not likely to have been introduced to it before, as you have been more traditional approaches to education. I am not asking you to accept it. I am asking you to explore it. Many critics judge it to be highly "left-wing." I don’t see it as left or right wing, as those are value judgments based on politics. I see it, instead, as one way to view how education formulates students’ beliefs about their society and world. Are these educational practices coercive, or are they enabling students to form individual views about society, freedom, and power?

NOTE: You are responsible for being aware of all of the information found on this syllabus. While instructors welcome emails about specific issues on assignments or issues that come up, I expect
that you will not email for information that you could find here or on Canvas.

**COURSE TOPICS:**
This course will cover the following content areas:
1. Purposes of education
2. Critical pedagogy
3. Social, historical, political, economic, and corporate foundations and influences on education

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The objectives of the course are as follows:
1. Develop skills and techniques for critically reflecting on issues in education.
2. Use resources (not opinions) to argue your points.
3. Create a critical media project to further analyze a topic from the course content.

**COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Define critical pedagogy and explain its importance to educational practice
2. Discuss ways in which social class affects quality of education
3. Argue positions of race and gender effects in the classroom
4. Describe problems, including bullying, faced by LGBTQ students
5. Articulate other social issues in education, such as bilingual education, disability education, schooling for democracy, political effects, and media literacy
6. Create a final project based on 15 hours of community engagement. It can be a video, Prezi, Panoptu, or other creative project that explores an educational issue with community

**TEXT AND MATERIALS:**
B. Additional readings and videos will be in our Canvas course materials.

**CANVAS USE:**
The class syllabus is posted in Canvas, an online course management system. In this class Canvas will be used for any additional readings, videos, or other class requirements/assistance as well as uploading of assignments.

**Course Attendance at First Class Meeting** – **You must report in by Thursday, August 28, to avoid being dropped from this course.** Please do so by introducing yourself in the Canvas discussion and replying to the assignment for Week One.

**COMPUTER LAPTOP USE**
USFSM requires all students to have laptops that can be brought with them to class.
- There will be times during which it will be helpful to have laptops for in-class activities. I will let you know. Other than those times, I will monitor in-class computer use. Taking notes is fine; checking email and writing to friends during class is rude and inappropriate and will be noted.

**GRADING, EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES:**
A. USFSM policy requires that all students receive a graded assignment or examination prior to the semester’s drop/withdrawal date.
B. See values for each assignment below. Rubrics will be posted for major assignments.
C. **GRADING:**
D. Assignments receive a point off for each day they are late. Only a doctor’s written notice or a discussed and approved excuse, **in advance with the instructor** will offer a change for delayed assignments.

E. I do not give permission to sell notes or tapes of class lectures.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

A. Assignments and due dates are listed in the Canvas modules and in the specifics given for each assignment, below.

B. Last day to drop class with a “W” is usually around the first of November. Please check with a student advisor early if you think you may do this.

**USFSM Policies**

A. **Academic Dishonesty:** The University considers any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers to be unacceptable behavior. Please be sure to review the university’s policy in the catalog, **USFSM Undergraduate Catalog**, the USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the **Student Code of Conduct**


**Academic integrity and plagiarism.** Students are responsible for understanding all university policies related to academic integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism, and students are responsible for asking questions to clarify expectations in an individual section. See http://www.usfsm.edu/catalog/academics/academic-integrity-of-students/ on issues involving academic integrity. If any assignment is determined to be in violation of our integrity standards, procedures will follow as stated on that webpage. If you choose to file a grievance, procedures are explained at http://www.usfsm.edu/catalog/academics/student-academic-grievance-procedure/

**Plagiarism results in an F or FF grade for the class.** If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, Purdue University has a great web page to help you know at https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/. Any attempt to use the work of others as your own is grounds for failing the course.

When in doubt, cite your source! Certainly cite when:

1. including a direct quote (including the page number).
2. you paraphrase or summarize ideas (but really paraphrase; don’t just replace a couple words in the original sentence).
3. ideas or information could be considered common knowledge, but you were unaware of the information prior to finding it, or you think your audience might be unfamiliar with it.

**PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE**

The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows student assignments be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to ask students to submit their assignments to Turnitin through Canvas. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and
previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student’s paper was plagiarized.

PLEASE REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM THE BODY OF YOUR PAPER AND REPLACE IT WITH YOUR USF ID#. ALSO REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM THE FILE NAME AND REPLACE IT WITH YOUR USF ID# (e.g., “U12345678 Essay 1.docx”) BEFORE SUBMITTING IT TO TURNITIN.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students are requested to maintain confidentiality as a way to keep their personal contact information (i.e. name, address, telephone) from being disclosed to vendors or other outside agencies. By your submission, you are also agreeing to release your original work for review for academic purposes to Turnitin.

B. Academic Disruption: The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. The policy for addressing academic disruption is included with Academic Dishonesty in the catalog: USFSM Undergraduate Catalog or USFSM Graduate Catalog, USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the USF System Student Code of Conduct.

C. Contingency Plans: It is the responsibility of the student to monitor our Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USFSM and College websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency. See the http://legacy.usfsm.edu/facilities/safetypreparedness.php for further information.

D. Disabilities Accommodations: Students are responsible for registering with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (about 5 working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation. Contact Information: Email disabilityservices@sar.usf.edu, Phone 941-359-4714. TTY: p41-359-4666

E. Religious Observances: USFSM recognizes the right of students and faculty to observe major religious holidays. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class for a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, prior to the holiday.

G. Web Portal Information: Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account. Students receive official USF correspondence and Canvas course information via that address.

A Note on Work Load:
Students frequently indicate that they are feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work. An investigation to understand the concern has uncovered several reasons for the stress:
1. This may be your first semester at USF. Courses are, in general, more demanding than courses offered at community and state colleges. Thus, the expectations about reading, writing, and research are greater. As a result, you may not be able to take as many courses successfully at USF as you did at a different institution.

2. You may be taking four (or more) courses, working full-time, and raising young children. Only a rare person can do a good job of juggling this kind of workload and responsibility.

A logical recommendation is that you not put yourself in the position of full-time classes and full-time work. Students often say they just want to get through the degree. There is more to a degree – or should be – than a piece of paper. It should mean that you have learned, and learned well, because you gave yourself the time to engage fully in your classes. You cannot do this if you have only the time to skim complex readings or to write a final draft the day a paper is due, and you should not expect high grades as a result of such practices. A work-to-school load suggestion in a UCF catalog seems reasonable:

- 40 hours per week if taking no more than 6 credit hours per term
- 30 hours per week if taking 9 credit hours
- 20 hours per week if taking 12 credit hours

Yes, financial obligations and other bureaucratic issues, such as scholarship requirements, cause students to overload their schedules. Be aware, though, of the impact that spreading yourself too thin can have on your ability to comprehend and complete class work, and on your physical and mental wellbeing. I have taken my own advice to heart after a 2014 sabbatical that brought me to a healthy work/life balance, and I do not plan to work evenings or weekends. You can expect me to put in full business hour workdays, usually in the office, and respond to you then.

**A Note on my Workload:**

Like you, I have more work obligations than just teaching this course. I care very much about my students and about my teaching, but I must also fulfill teaching obligations to other courses in addition to numerous service and research obligations. I have also learned the hard way that working seven days/week, more than 8 hours/day is the path to poor health. You need to know that I will be hard at work during the typical business week, but I reserve the right to be away from work on evenings and weekends. I have found that I work more effectively when I draw these boundaries between work and the rest of my life, and I enjoy both this way.

**A Final Important Note:**

This course is not intended to make you comfortable. If it causes you to question your opinions, or at times make you angry, defensive, or even confused about your values or beliefs, then the course has done its job. Schools and Society is **not** an easy course. It will insist that you look at inequities and injustices, many that have been instituted by your race if you are White, or your class if you are middle or higher. If you adhere to a particular religion, it will challenge you to expand your views to include those of other religions. If you are insistent about a particular sexuality, it will remind you that others will diverge from your sexual values, and they deserve to be afforded respect and dignity. **Expect to be provoked.** In fact, remember that you have no idea about the diversity of the students in our classroom at USF. Expect that you are among people of diverse religions, sexuality, upbringings, ethnicities, and beliefs. Remember this as you post remarks and speak in the class.
Controversy and disagreement are great, but not disrespect. Your instructor will do her best to create an environment that is safe for expressing viewpoints. I will ask you to do the same.

I am serious about deadlines. Frequently students send end of semester requests to make up work from the early months of the semester, and ask me to grade extra revisions and offer last-minute extra credit. Instead, do your work on time and do it well. Don’t write at the last hour and expect that you will get the highest grades. If a true emergency comes up, let your instructor know right away, and present documentation. Sometimes there may be opportunities for extra credit – it all depends on what extra events are going on at the campus or in our community. Those are the only extra credit opportunities, as they are truly “extra.”

TO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS ONLY:

TaskStream: TaskStream is a web-based electronic portfolio required of all students in the College of Education (COE) programs. It provides a way to submit documents, called Critical Tasks to instructors for feedback and assessment. The COE uses these assessments to evaluate candidate progress toward meeting standards set by the Florida Department of Education, the faculty and professional organizations. Further, the COE analyzes data from the assessments and uses the data for program planning in order to ensure continuous improvement. Assignments designated as Critical Tasks must be uploaded to your electronic portfolio on TaskStream and be rated with a mean score of 3 or higher in order for you to pass the course. Remember, failure to upload the Critical Task may result in a failing grade.

In this course the critical tasks are: ___ the Major Project

Essential Assignments: These are assignments that have been aligned with one or more FLDOE curriculum requirements, i.e., ESOL standards, Reading Competencies, or Florida Teacher Competencies/Skills.

In this course the essential assignments are the Diversity activity and art event or news project

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments:
You will typically read 2-3 articles/week (25-50 pages). At upper undergraduate course levels, students are expected to analyze what they read and to come to class prepared to discuss and respond to the readings. As they accumulate over the weeks, think about ways in which the assignments complement and contrast with readings from other classes. When you do not know terms or events mentioned in the readings, look them up! This will make you an active learner and make the course more valuable to you. You will receive credit for doing this work through written assignments about the readings.

Writing assignments:
This is a writing intensive course (Gordon Rule), which requires that you write about 4500 words (the equivalent of 15 double-spaced typed pages) and that I critique your writing ability. Because I am not requiring a formal research paper for this section, I will be paying attention to your writing on initial reflections on each week’s assignments with which we will begin most classes, as well as a
critique of an article that you will write and your response to the diversity exercise you must complete. USFSM provides extra help through our library, technology, and writing centers. Visit the Information Commons to learn about their services.

Criteria for written assignments:
When asked to analyze or evaluate, be specific. Also, remember that a summary is not an analysis. If you are not sure of the difference, check a good book on writing styles or talk with your instructor.

Reflections or Class Activities (3 points each; 36 points total). Be prepared to write a reflection in class about the readings we will be discussing. I will devote the first 20 minutes of each class to this exercise to fulfill Gordon Rule requirements. Think about the readings carefully so you are prepared to write: What were the main points? How were they exemplified? What assumptions does the writer make? What assumptions do you make about the article (and/or the writer)? What did you learn from the reading? What are your questions? Occasionally another class activity will take the place of the reflection.

Diversity Activity (Essential Assignment) (12 points). Be uncomfortable in your skin! Go a place or two that your personal values or comfort zone would not typically take you: a Republican rally if you are a Democrat (or vice versa), a place where your native language is in the minority, a gay pride rally if you are straight, an immigration or migrant workers’ meeting, a Planned Parenthood office, a pro-life etc. You need to spend 5 hours total for this assignment. We can brainstorm ideas in class. Write a 2-3 page critical reflection in which you summarize and analyze the event(s). Express your feelings and your thoughts, and consider what you have in common with this event and what you learn from the people you meet.

Bureaucracy (10 points). During the course, we will take time to research in class and conduct a role play or debate about a current educational issue. I will let you know in advance. You must be in class and participate to receive credit.

Art Event (10 points). Attend an art event: a play, a concert, a dance, art exhibit, museum, etc. There are plenty of free events and low-cost ones at schools, remember! Write a short reflection about ways in which the event lends itself to a social commentary in ways that lectures and papers cannot. (This experience will replace the former news assignment that is a part of TaskStream for educators.)

OR

News Report. This alternative to the art event requires that you group into 3-4 students to investigate a current news issue that you can relate to education. It does not have to be an education news item. As an example, you could investigate the issue of the Central American children trying to enter the US. It is highly likely that US school students will be aware and interested in this information. I would expect you to gather news about the same event from various perspectives, i.e., Fox News clips, MSNBC, PBS, etc. Each member of your group would be responsible for explaining a perspective, and the group will be responsible for
facilitating a discussion with the class.

**Major Project** (32: 6 points each for two primary stage project pieces; 20 for final). Critical pedagogy is about far more than reading and writing in an academic environment. It requires *action*. Think about something you care about strongly that could be changed through some kind of community understanding or appreciation or new perspective taking. Consider ways in which this topic or situation may be misunderstood as a result of status quo thinking or bias. You might look through the book for ideas. Compose a question about the topic that you can use to critically explore and reflect. Conduct some research on the topic outside the chapters of the text.

Now add the social dimension through service learning. Engage with a community to learn from them, work with them, discuss what you have learned (minimum of 10 hours of community engagement). Consider how you can present your project to the class and to your instructor. Use your research and service project to create a well-crafted and logical presentation about the topic and your question. It can be a video, a website, a Panoptu presentation, or a PowerPoint that includes multimedia (such as embedded audio and/or video). Rubric will be on Canvas. Of course, we will have plenty of time to shape this assignment together as we go along, and I will give some suggestions and examples.

This course has been designed to accommodate a number of requirements. It serves as a writing intensive course. It serves as a General Education course with a service-learning requirement. It serves as an exit course. And it must fulfill certain requirements for those intending to be teachers while also providing an engaging course for non-educators. The final project intends to combine creativity with research and critique that includes a service learning dimension. Because of the requirements for teacher candidates, COE students will have to address some issues that will be flexible or optional for those in other colleges.

This syllabus may be modified during the course of the semester. If it is, the changes will be published via a Canvas announcement, USF email, or both.

**The weekly details are in the Canvas modules. Please pay close attention to them, as you are responsible for each week’s readings and activities.**