

Syllabus for Education 392: Education in a Multicultural Society

Winter Term, 1999: Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6

Lectures on Tuesdays 1-2:30, Schorling Auditorium
Discussion Sections meet an additional 90 minutes on either
Wednesdays (1-2:30), Thursdays (1-2:30), or Friday (9-10:30)

Description of the Course

Presents philosophy, history and sociology of American education in relation to its contemporary settings. Attends to sociopolitical contexts and to roles of technology in society and schooling. Places special emphasis on multicultural thought and experience in American society. [*School of Education Bulletin, 1997-99, p. 128*]

This course assists the prospective teacher in understanding the forces that shape the system of schooling in the U.S., and how differences in race, gender, language, creed, and class impact this system. To the extent these forces are understood, they can, in some part, be controlled by the teacher so that he or she might realize the noble ends of education we seek for every learner.

The student successfully completing this course will be able to (1) identify the major social, political, and economic forces that shape our schools and educational practices; (2) place these forces in cultural, historical, and philosophical perspective; and (3) identify ways to manage these forces that accord with standards of social justice and high educational ideals.

A critical aspect of the course is the distinction between education and schooling. Education is an ideal a society has for its children; schools are the practical manifestation of this ideal. It may happen that in the construction of schools, educational ideals are lost, ignored, or overwhelmed by other social forces. We will explore this disjunction in American schools, with special attention to discerning the obligations and opportunities of schooling in a democracy, and how certain forms of teaching and learning enhance democratic ideals, while other forms impede these ideals.

Instructor

Gary D Fenstermacher, Professor of Education
Room 4120 School of Education Building
Office phone: (734) 647-2448 * Email: gfenster@umich.edu

Office hours: To be announced. Please feel free to visit during office hours to discuss any matter pertaining to the course or to your preparation for teaching. If office hours are not convenient, please schedule an appointment using the phone, email, or the time just before or after class on Tuesday.

Teaching Assistants

Ericka Brumfield, Tehani Collazo, and David Johnson are the three teaching assistants for this course. Each of them has responsibility for two sections of the course. In addition to having responsibility for the general functioning of their respective sections, the teaching assistants review, comment on, and grade student work. Teaching assistants make final grade recommendations to the instructor, who assigns the final grade for the course.

Office locations, hours, and phone numbers for teaching assistants will be distributed on a supplement to this syllabus the second week of class.

Tehani Collazo, in addition to her regular teaching responsibilities, has administrative responsibility for the course, including grade and attendance records. If you are unable to resolve a records or administrative problem through your T.A., please contact Ms. Collazo.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. Attend lectures and discussion sections. Because attendance is vital to success in this course, roll will be taken at most class sessions. If absence is unavoidable, you are requested to notify your T.A. in advance (you can leave a voice mail or email message, indicating your name, when you will be absent, and brief reason for the absence). Legitimate reasons for absence are medical emergency, family emergency, and scheduled religious observance. If you miss lecture or section, please arrange for a fellow student to brief you on activities, topics covered, and assignments.

Note: If you miss section on a quiz day, you must arrange for and take a make-up quiz prior to the next meeting of the section. The student is responsible for making these arrangements with the T.A. Unless prior arrangements are made, quizzes not completed before the next section meeting cannot be made up, and a zero will be recorded as the grade for the quiz (an exception will be made in the case of severe and sustained medical illness or family emergency).

2. Complete assigned readings and work assignments on schedule. You will gain much more from the course, and do better work, if you do.

3. Actively engage the materials and ideas in the course. Do this while doing the assigned reading, when conversing with colleagues and friends, and when attending this and other classes. You are encouraged to use section discussions to clarify confusion, raise questions, extend discussion, and open new avenues of inquiry.

4. Make use of office hours to meet with the T.A.s and the instructor. If the scheduled hours are not convenient, make an appointment for a time that works for you. If you are having difficulty with the course, or have concerns about it, please raise these matters with the T.A. or the instructor promptly and honestly.

5. Be fair and honest in representing your work to others. Do not plagiarize, cheat, or otherwise misrepresent the fruits of your own scholarly labors. The applicable UM Student Codes regarding academic integrity are in force in this course. You are responsible for knowing and following provisions of the codes.

6. Take such initiative as is required to make the course interesting, enjoyable and

productive for you and your fellow students.

Texts - required

1. Catherine Cornbleth & Dexter Waugh, *The Great Speckled Bird* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995). Code: **GS**
2. *Funding for Justice* (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 1997). Code: **FJ**
3. Gary Fenstermacher & Jonas Soltis, *Approaches to Teaching*, 2nd edition (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992). Code: **AT**
4. Neil Postman, *The End of Education* (New York: Vintage Random House, 1996). Code: **EE**
5. A 14 week subscription to *Education Week*, a weekly newspaper in the field of education. All students should give their Teaching Assistants a check, made out to **Education Week**, in the amount of \$17.50. All checks must be received by the end of lecture on January 12. Code: **EW**

Texts - recommended

1. Louis Fischer, David Schimmel & Cynthia Kelly, *Teachers and the Law*, 5th edition (New York: Longman, 1999). Code: **TL**
2. Joan Wink, *Critical Pedagogy* (New York: Longman, 1997). Code: **CP**

Note: The codes are used to designate assigned readings in the class schedule shown later in this syllabus.

Examinations, Quizzes, & Weekly Summaries

There is one in-class examination, on Tuesday, April 20. This examination will be the final examination for the course, and will take the full 80 minutes of class time. It will cover the entire course.

In addition, short (15 minute) quizzes will occur in the section meetings. There are likely to be eight quizzes during the term.

Students are also asked to submit, on a schedule established by the T.A., critical summaries of readings or focal topics from the lecture. Up to eight of these critical summaries may be requested by the T.A.s. These critical summaries should be typed or computer printed and not exceed two double-spaced pages.

Assignments

In addition to the examination, quizzes, and summaries, there are two assignments to complete. For each assignment, submit a paper of 6 to 8 pages (1500-2000 words), formatted as described later in this syllabus.

First Assignment

(Choose one assignment from the three options below.)

- A. Write an essay on the point and purpose of public schools in American society.

Examine the views of three scholars or theorists (including Postman's view in the *End of Education*), then offer your own carefully developed argument for the purpose of public schools. Other writers whose views you might examine are Mortimer Adler, Kieran Egan, Paulo Freire, Howard Gardner, John Goodlad, Jane Roland Martin, Nel Noddings, TheodoreSizer, and Joan Wink.

- B. Interview two teachers, one with 10 or more years experience, the other with at least three years of experience. Discuss with them their views of teaching, and the key ideas on which these views are based. Try to determine how these views were formed; i.e., what are the key influences shaping their teaching? Analyze their responses using concepts and theories discussed in this course.
- C. Write an essay analyzing the way the State of Michigan (or another state you select) finances public education. Examine how funding formulae work, the impact of taxation, recent state court decisions affecting educational financing (if applicable), and who makes educational financing decisions at the state level. If possible, interview persons who are knowledgeable about school funding, such as the finance officer of a local school district, or a person in the state department of education.

Second Assignment

(Select one from the options given below)

- A. Attend two local school board meetings, at a district of your choice. Report on major issues before the board and how the board responds to these issues. If possible, interview a board member and/or the superintendent. Comment on the role of the superintendent vis-a-vis the board. Discuss the likely impact of board actions on teachers.
- B. Write an essay on multiculturalism and diversity in education, reflecting on the meaning of these concepts and how they apply to the responsibilities and functions of schools in American society. Examine these concepts in light of some contemporary educational reform initiatives, such as privatization and standardized testing.
- C. Write an essay describing your philosophy of teaching. Trace the historical antecedents of your views, and show how your views connect to more widely accepted philosophies about teaching (use material from *Approaches to Teaching* to do this). Justify how your views are in the best interests of children, parents, and the state.

Grades

The final grade for the course is calculated as follows:

The final examination is worth 15%

Each assignment is worth 20% (40% total)

All quizzes, combined, are worth 20%

All critical summaries, combined are worth 15%

Attendance at lectures and sections, and engagement and participation in section activities are worth 10%

Instructors and Teaching Assistants may adjust these point values by up to 5% per category, if such adjustment is thought to more accurately reflect the quality of the

student's work.

Note on Incomplete grades: The grade of I will be used only in cases of medical illness or severe family emergency that causes an absence from classes of two weeks or more. Written proof of illness or emergency is required.

Receipt of grades and work following final class

If the instructor has not returned all your work by the final class, you may retrieve it by (1) leaving a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage to mail the work back to you, or (2) picking it up the following term, within the first six weeks of that term. Work not collected after the first six weeks of the following term will be discarded (unless you make other arrangements, by mail or phone).

Final grades are not posted, given out by phone, or by the secretary. Please leave a stamped, addressed post card, send an email request 10 days after the last class, or stop by to see the T.A. or instructor to obtain your final grade.

Schedule and Due Dates for Assignments

Week of

Jan. 6	Classes begin	Attend discussion sections, review course structure and requirements.
Jan 12	Lect 1	What do we have schools? Reading for this class: EE ix - 92
Jan 19	Lect 2	What are the differences between education and schooling? Reading for this class: EE to end, and current EW
Jan 26	Lect 3	How did public education begin in the United States? Reading for this class: Current EW
Feb 2	Lect 4	What has shaped schooling in America over the last century? Reading for this class: Current EW
Feb 9	Lect 5	Who pays for the schools we have, and how? Reading: FJ 3, 14-45 (incl 69-75), and 48-49 (Glossary on page 68), and current EW
Feb 16	Lect 6	What is the impact of school finance on diversity, school curriculum, and student achievement? Reading: FJ 4-13 and 50-60, plus current EW
Feb 23	Lect 7	What is the impact of the law on the shape of schooling in the U.S.? Reading: FJ 4 -9, and 61-66, current EW, and, if you would like to

know more about law and education, consult TL
Assignment No. 1 due

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|--------|------------|---|
| Mar 2 | No class | Winter break. Enjoy! |
| Mar 9 | Lect 8 | Who runs the schools? Who decides what happens to students, and how is the decision made?
Reading: GS v-26, current EW |
| Mar 16 | Lect 9 | Do the schools lead the society or follow it? What is the role of schooling in sustaining democracy and attaining social justice?
Reading: GS 27-91 and current EW. Note: Second chapter of GS is quite conceptual; reading Wink's CP will help you with chapter 2; you may also want to read the later chapters in GS, then return to chapter 2 |
| Mar 23 | Lect 10 | What are the current reform efforts in education, and how are they likely to impact the schools and the work of teachers?
Reading: Finish GS, plus current EW |
| Mar 30 | Lect 11 | What are the different ways to approach teaching?
Reading: AT xi-53, 80-93 and current EW |
| Apr 6 | Lect 12 | What is the difference between classical and critical approaches to teaching? What difference might these differences make in my teaching?
Readings: AT 54-78, 93-108, current EW, and, if at all possible, consult CP.
<u>Assignment No. 2 due</u> |
| Apr 13 | Lect 13 | What are schools for and what schools are best? What are teachers for, and what is the best way to teach?
Reading: Current EW |
| Apr 20 | Final exam | In class final examination, covering entire course; please bring examination booklets to class. You may consult notes, but no texts. |

Guidelines for Written Work

The assignments that you submit in this course should follow a common format. Please be sure that all work turned in meets these standards:

1. Neatly typed or printed using a word processor.

2. Double-spaced, 1.5" margins left and right margins; 1" top and bottom.
3. No title pages, covers, or binders.
4. Stapled at upper left corner, with the following information on upper right corner of the first page only:
[Your name]
Education 392 [section # and T.A.]
[Assignment #]
[Date assignment is turned in]

5. Place title at top of first page and begin text immediately following.
6. All but the first page should be numbered, either at top right or bottom center.
7. Reference work as appropriate; use either APA, Chicago, or MLA style.
8. Spell check and proofread; if last minute corrections are required, and these are not extensive, make them with pen or pencil.

Here is an example of the top portion of the first page of a paper:

<p>John Doreme Education 392-002 Assignment 2A November 3, 1998</p>
<p>How Michigan Finances Its Schools</p> <p>Like many other states, the State of Michigan has faced legal challenges to its system of school finance. Prior to the passage of Proposal A, Michigan paid for</p>

Your assignments will be returned to you with an evaluation cover sheet similar to the one on the next page.

Appraisal of Assignment No. _____

Student name: _____ Date received: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date reviewed: _____

1. Work matches assignment? Points available: **20** Earned: _____

Was care exercised in crafting the assignment according to the description given in the syllabus and advice given in class? Did you do what you were supposed to do?

Comments:

2. Is writing cogent? Points available: **15** Earned: _____

Does it say a great deal in the space allowed?

Comments:

3. Is the writing clear? Points available: **15** Earned: _____

Is it easy to ascertain the structure of the paper and grasp the concepts and ideas presented?

Comments:

4. Is the reasoning valid? Points available: **15** Earned: _____

Is the argument well constructed, and do its parts cohere in a logically compelling way?

Comments:

5. Content from the readings & class? Points available: **15** Earned: _____

Have you incorporated relevant and appropriate readings from the course and ideas developed in class presentations? Are references cited as appropriate?

Comments:

6. Interesting and informative overall? Points available: **20** Earned: _____

Does the assignment make a substantive contribution to the reader's understanding of the topic and

does it engage the reader's interest in the topic?
Comments:

Total points earned:_____