

**Syllabus for Education 790**  
**Fundamental Issues in Educational Studies**  
Fall Term, 1998 - Section 001 - Mondays 4-8 - 2229 SEB

Instructor

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On urgent matters, I may be reached at my home: 426-7853. Office hours: Mondays: Prior to and following classes; Tuesdays: 1:00 - 2:30; Wednesdays 1 - 2:30; Thursdays and Fridays by appointment.

Description and purpose of the course

The catalog description states that this course “offers an integrated study of the psychological, social, philosophical, historical, and curricular bases of education through an examination of a small number of issues or themes of profound and lasting importance in educational studies. Graduate course required of all new Educational Studies doctoral students. Should be taken early in the student’s program.”

We will realize this description by taking a “critical concepts” approach, examining five such concepts. They are: (1) Normation, (2) Liberalism, (3) Knowledge, (4) Culture, and (5) Democracy. Different disciplinary perspectives will be brought to bear for each of these critical concepts, ranging from history and philosophy to sociology, economics, and political science.

The overarching aim of this course is to acquaint the student with a number of theories and concepts that have relevance for the study of educational issues and problems, and to gain both an understanding of and practice in relating these concepts and methods to the formulation and analysis of educational policy. A secondary, though still very central, aim is to assist the student in positioning himself or herself within the theoretical literature, thereby gaining a sense of where he or she stands in relation to the larger ideas and ideals that have characterized educational thought over the centuries.

Structure of the course

The course is divided into two components, a theory component and a policy component. The theory component covers the first 8 weeks of the course; the policy component, the last 5 weeks. During the theory component, our focus will be on the five critical concepts: Normation, Liberalism, Knowledge, Culture, and Democracy. During the policy component, we will apply the ideas gained in the theory component to a selected range of educational policy issues.

Every student will be a member of two teams, a theory team and a policy team. There will be four theory teams, representing four of the five critical concepts (normation is a concept common to the other four, and thus is not studied as a separate area). There will also be four policy teams, representing the four policy domains described below. Each policy team is made up of at least one member from each of the theory teams, so that every policy team has on it at least one person conversant in the areas of liberalism, knowledge, culture, and democracy.

During the theory component, or first 8 weeks, the class reads the required texts in common, and each student develops a supplemental reading list in her or his concept area. This supplemental list is developed in concert with other members of the theory team, so that there is a broad range of reading taking place on the topic.

During the policy component, students examine a selected policy issue in depth, working out the resolution of this issue in a manner indicative of a theoretical understanding of and sensitivity to practice. The policy team topics are:

1. Human Differences in Education
  - A. Special Education
  - B. Race and Ethnicity
  - C. Gender
  - D. Religious affiliation
  - E. Language
  - F. Class
  - G. Sexual orientation
2. Teaching and Teacher Education
  - A. Continuing education and staff development for teachers
  - B. Hiring, retention and advancement of teachers
  - C. Preparing new teachers; accreditation; certification
  - E. Standard tests of teaching excellence (e.g., NBPTS)
3. Contemporary Reform Initiatives
  - A. National goals for schools
  - B. Systemic reform
  - C. School choice and vouchers
  - D. Technology and telecomputing
  - E. Standards and assessment
  - F. Service learning
4. Education beyond the School
  - A. The role of home and parent
  - B. Home schooling
  - C. Museums, parks, and community recreation
  - D. Clubs, teams, and social organizations
  - E. Business, industry, and commerce
  - F. Rethinking the role of the school

#### Student duties and assignments

Students are expected to (1) attend all classes, as well as team meetings scheduled during and outside of class; (2) complete assigned readings and written work on schedule; (3) actively engage the content and ideas developed in the course, as well as engage fellow students and the instructor; (4) display respectful and thoughtful consideration for the views expressed by members of the class; and (5) comply with the University's and the profession's guidelines for sound scholarly practice.

#### Examinations

There are two examinations, scheduled for October 26 and December 14. These examinations are intended to ascertain the student's comprehension of readings, class presentations, and class discussions. Each examination will last 90 minutes. Students may consult texts, notes and other resources during the examination.

Students may elect an alternative to the examinations, by turning in biweekly reports according to the format described in supplement A (attached). In order to elect this option in place of the first exam, the student must be present at all classes from 9/14 to 10/26, inclusive. In order to elect this option in lieu of the second examination, the student must attend all classes between 10/26 and 12/7, inclusive.

Reports in lieu of the first examination are due at the beginning of class on 9/21, 10/5, and 10/19. Reports in lieu of the second examination are due at the beginning of class on 11/9, 11/23, and 12/7. Reports must be submitted at the date and time due.

### Papers

Two papers are required; a theory paper and a policy paper.

The theory paper is due Friday, November 6. This paper is in three parts. Part I is a presentation and analysis of ideas pertaining to the theory area you selected; Part II is a carefully argued position that you take on an aspect of this theory domain; Part III is a bibliographic essay, annotating the key works used in preparation of this paper. Use Chicago style for notes, references, and citations.

The policy paper is due before noon on Wednesday, December 9. This paper is also in three parts. Part I describes the policy issue or problem, in straightforward, cogent prose. Part II is a carefully crafted position that you are taking on this policy matter, with benefits and liabilities clearly shown. Part III is a discussion of how your theory area illuminates or refines this policy issue or problem. Use APA style for citations and references.

Excluding bibliography or list of references cited, each paper should be between 8 and 12 double-spaced pages (about 2500 words). More detail about each of these papers will be provided during class sessions. The Hacker text (cited below) is your guide to both the substance and the referencing style of these papers.

### Required texts

1. Appiah, K. Anthony, and Amy Gutmann. Color Conscious. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.
2. Green, Thomas F. The Formation of Conscience in an Age of Technology (The Dewey Lecture, 1984). Syracuse, NY: University of Syracuse School of Education, 1984.  
\*\*\*This text will be made available in class\*\*\*
3. Gutmann, Amy, ed. Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. Note: This book may show Charles Taylor, et al, as the author; it is an expanded edition of a 1992 work entitled Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition."
4. Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Manual of Style. Boston: Bedford Books, 1997.
5. Orrill, Robert, ed. The Condition of American Liberal Education. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1995.
6. Soder, Roger, ed. Democracy, Education, and the Schools. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.

Reading assignments are made in class. The order is as follows: Green, Orrill, TBA piece on knowledge, Appiah and Gutmann, Gutmann, Soder. This reading will be completed during the first eight weeks of the course.

### Course grades

Course grades are determined as follows:

- 20%** for each examination or set of three reports
- 30%** for each paper (Theory and Policy)

On a personal note

If you are having difficulties of any sort in the course, be they with lecture presentations or discussions, with teams, the readings, or the instructor, please discuss them with me. I will take whatever steps I can—consistent with course objectives—to ensure that the course will be a sustaining and productive experience for you.

**Addendum**

Format for Biweekly Course Reports

You have the option of taking the mid-term and final examinations or submitting reports every other week. If you chose the report option, please use the format indicated below, and follow these guidelines for preparing the reports.

Guidelines

Typed on 8.5x11 paper, double-spaced, with minimum one inch margins

Number pages consecutively

No covers or binders; simply staple at upper left corner

At upper right of first page, enter name, course, date submitted, and *identify the two weeks covered by the report.*

Use spell check; proofread; enter minor corrections in pen or pencil

Clarity, cogency, and substance are the standards of quality

Length

Five crisp, well-edited pages (1250 words) should be sufficient for you to come to grips with the three topic areas indicated below.

Format

Each report should answer the questions below, in the order indicated.

1. What have you learned from class presentations and discussions?  
What are the key ideas, concepts and positions covered over the last two weeks?  
What is your appraisal of this material?
2. What readings related to the course have you done during the past two weeks?  
Cite the reading you have done, with page numbers, and provide an abstract of each article, chapter, monograph, etc. (include required reading).  
How is this reading related to your work in and objectives for this course?
3. What has taken place in your team during the last two weeks, and how is helpful or unhelpful to your thinking on topics covered in this course?
4. Please evaluate your progress to date.