EDUC 311: Diversity in Education

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
College of Education and Human Services

Syllabus, Fall 2015
All Sections

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the intersections between education, democracy and diversity in American schooling. It introduces students to key philosophical, sociological and political questions in education and asks students to critically examine the role of education in a diverse and pluralistic democracy. Students will examine the relationship between democracy and education, including how educational institutions and practices might be structured democratically. Students will develop an awareness of race, ethnicity, class, gender and other lines of difference, and explore how schooling might be structured in ways that build equity and justice. This course supports developing reflective teacher practitioners who can critically analyze some of the central forces shaping public education. Throughout the course of the semester, we examine some of the following questions:

- What are the purposes of schooling in a diverse and democratic nation?
- How are these purposes reflected in different pedagogical strategies and choices?
- How do issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class and inequality impact educational practices?
- How might schools and curriculum address issues of diversity?
- What is the relationship between diversity, democracy and education?
- What role should schools—and teachers—play in fostering justice and equity?

We will explore these questions and issues through three central lenses: interpretive, critical, and normative. We will begin interpreting educational issues, asking how we might understand the nature of an issue or problem. We will then view these issues critically, looking at how problems are shaped by political and social forces. Finally, we will examine the normative dimension of issues, asking what we—as democratic citizens and prospective educators—ought to do about such issues and how education should be structured and to what ends.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will understand:

1. Key social and political issues in American education, including diversity and inequality
2. The implications of a culturally diverse population for American education
3. The role of schooling in a democratic society
4. How to think critically and reflectively about education and schooling

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This course contributes to key dimensions of the conceptual framework for the Teacher Education Program (TEP) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. EDUC 311 focuses on two dimensions in more depth:

- **Engagement**: this course supports teacher candidates as they develop into reflective and ethical practitioners that advocate for—and collaborate with—diverse families. EDUC 311 explores how teacher candidates might work towards the goal of an equitable and inclusive education for all students.
• Identities: this course helps teacher candidates understand the diverse characteristics and abilities of students, and how those students are shaped by the context of their social, economic, cultural and linguistic and academic experiences. Teacher candidates also will explore the characteristics of safe and healthy learning environment that facilitates cultural and linguistic responsiveness, mutual respect and engagement.

CORE CURRICULUM


ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

EDUC 311 is designed to address some of the revised Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (revised, 2013). EDUC 311 focuses on Standard 1 (sections a, c, d, e, f). It also introduces teacher candidates to Standard 1 (sections g, h, i, j, k, l), Standard 2 (sections e, h, k, q) and Standard 3 (section k). The following standards are met, in part, through the learning outcomes of the course:

1. **Standard 1 - Teaching Diverse Students** – The competent teacher understands the diverse characteristics and abilities of each student and how individuals develop and learn within the context of their social, economic, cultural, linguistic, and academic experiences. The teacher uses these experiences to create instructional opportunities that maximize student learning.

   • 1A) understands the spectrum of student diversity (e.g., race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education, gifted, English language learners (ELL), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity) and the assets that each student brings to learning across the curriculum;

   • 1C) understands how teaching and student learning are influenced by development (physical, social and emotional, cognitive, linguistic), past experiences, talents, prior knowledge, economic circumstances and diversity within the community;

   • 1D) understands the impact of cognitive, emotional, physical, and sensory disabilities on learning and communication pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (also referred to as "IDEA") (20 USC 1400 et seq.), its implementing regulations (34 CFR 300; 2006), Article 14 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/Art.14] and 23 Ill. Adm. Code 226 (Special Education);

   • 1E) understands the impact of linguistic and cultural diversity on learning and communication;

   • 1F) understands his or her personal perspectives and biases and their effects on one’s teaching;

   • 1G) understands how to identify individual needs and how to locate and access technology, services, and resources to address those needs.
- 1H) analyzes and uses student information to design instruction that meets the diverse needs of students and leads to ongoing growth and achievement;
- 1I) stimulates prior knowledge and links new ideas to already familiar ideas and experiences;
- 1J) differentiates strategies, materials, pace, levels of complexity, and language to introduce concepts and principles so that they are meaningful to students at varying levels of development and to students with diverse learning needs;
- 1K) facilitates a learning community in which individual differences are respected; and
- 1L) uses information about students' individual experiences, families, cultures, and communities to create meaningful learning opportunities and enrich instruction for all students.

2. **Standard 2 - Content Area and Pedagogical Knowledge** The competent teacher has in-depth understanding of content area knowledge that includes central concepts, methods of inquiry, structures of the disciplines, and content area literacy. The teacher creates meaningful learning experiences for each student based upon interactions among content area and pedagogical knowledge, and evidence-based practice.
   - 2E) understands how diverse student characteristics and abilities affect processes of inquiry and influence patterns of learning;
   - 2H) understands the relationship among language acquisition (first and second), literacy development, and acquisition of academic content and skills.
   - 2K) engages students in the processes of critical thinking and inquiry and addresses standards of evidence of the disciplines;
   - 2Q) applies and adapts an array of content area literacy strategies to make all subject matter accessible to each student.

3. **Standard 3 - Planning for Differentiated Instruction** – The competent teacher plans and designs instruction based on content area knowledge, diverse student characteristics, student performance data, curriculum goals, and the community context. The teacher plans for ongoing student growth and achievement.
   - 3K) incorporates experiences into instructional practices that relate to a student’s current life experiences and to future life experiences;

**REQUIRED TEXTS & READINGS**


3) **Course readings will be provided via D2L.**
The course texts are available in the university book store in the Student Center. You may also purchase the books online, but make sure to get the editions noted here. In addition to the required course texts, we will also be reading a variety of essays, articles and other sources. We will also be making use of D2L for online links and to share information with each other. You will need a valid siu.edu email account, and an updated DAWG ID number. D2L can be accessed at: http://online.siu.edu.

**Important Note:** You must bring a “hard” copy the day’s reading assignments to class. Good class discussions also depend on us having access to the readings that we will be talking about. While reading, please make note of particular passages to share in class and also be prepared to provide evidence for your own claims by drawing on the texts. To receive full credit for participating in that day’s class, **you must have the readings with you.**

**EVALUATION**

Our goal is to have you thoughtfully engage the different essays we will read, to ask critical questions about the purposes of education, and to apply what we’ve learned in the course to examine educational issues important to you. Your final grade will be based upon class participation, in-class writing assignments, two short essays, a midterm paper and a final project. Each of the assignments is described below, with its weight in parentheses.

1. **Class Participation (10%)**: Thoughtful and informed participation in the course will be a significant part of your final grade. Thoughtful and informed participation means three things: (a) **attendance** in class, (b) **preparation** for class and (c) **participation** in class. I expect that you will attend every class on time: missing class or arriving to class late will affect your participation grade (see below). Please note, however, that participation is more than attendance. You are expected to complete readings before each class so that you can participate in both small and large group discussions and activities.

   In addition, participation involves being an ‘active’ speakers and a listener. Be prepared to share your thoughts, offer evidence for your claims, and bring an open mind to what others are sharing. Essentially, my view of a good learning environment is one in which **everyone assumes responsibility for the quality of the class.** While small lectures will be used to clarify important points from class materials, we will spend the vast majority of our time engaged in discussion and small group activities, including activities where we offer feedback on each others’ work. I will try to be alert to facilitating the class in ways that allow multiple perspectives and voices to be part of the conversation. But you can also help in this process—and avoid a situation where certain voices/perspectives dominate—by carefully monitoring your own contributions in class. Essentially, I ask that we work together to foster a cooperative learning community. A few general guidelines govern such a community:

   - **Class activities are a cooperative effort.** Everyone can contribute, this is not a competitive environment (the goal is to collectively build knowledge, not make better points than your peers).
   - **We all practice active listening** (paraphrase others’ comments, encourage others to speak up, allow everyone to speak and interrupt with care).
   - **We don’t withdraw from or ignore conflict** (conflict can offer significant learning opportunities, as long as we can respectfully disagree with each other without questioning each others’ experience or competence).
   - **We are self-reflective** about our own contributions to the class (i.e., have I been speaking up too much? Did I just cut off someone’s point? Have I withdrawn or avoided the discussion?).
   - **We all keep our sense of humor.**
Likewise, every class is influenced by the fact that students come from widely diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and professional backgrounds and hold different views. Since learning involves hearing, analyzing and drawing on a diversity of views, I expect collegial and respectful dialogue across disciplinary, cultural, and personal boundaries. One last note: if at any time you feel silenced by the conversation, please make an appointment with me (as soon as you can) to discuss the issue.

2. **Letter of Introduction (ungraded, 0%)**: Before the second week of class, each of you should write a brief letter to me (1-2 pages, type-written) that introduces who you are, your interests in education and your future goals. Most importantly, please tell me a little about who you are as a **learner**. That is, how do you learn best? I’d also like to have you reflect on—and share—an example of a powerful learning experience you’ve had in the past (this may not have been in a formal school or university setting). What made this a powerful learning experience? What about this experience clicked for you? What might this experience reveal about how you learn best, or what makes education powerful for you? Please bring this letter with you to class on January 20th.

3. **In-class Quizzes and Reading Checks (10%)** Over the course of the semester, we will be completing several in-class writing assignments, reading quizzes and other activities. The dates of these essays and quizzes will not be announced - if you do the reading, you should not have a problem formulating thoughtful responses. You will be allowed to refer to the readings or any notes you have taken on them while writing your response. (So, make sure to bring the readings with you to class!).

4. **Short Essays (20%)**: We will be completing two short essay assignments (4-5 pages) in the early part of the semester. These essays will ask you to critically engage with the course readings: to summarize viewpoints, craft arguments, and support them with evidence from the text. One of the goals of these essays is to support your writing in this course with early feedback. Your instructor will pass out a list of three essay questions designed to help you critically engage with some question in the course reading. You’ll be able to choose one of these options. More details will be shared in class.

5. **Mid-Term Paper: Diversity in Education (30%)**: We will be writing one longer mid-term paper (6-8 pages) that explores the relationship between education and diversity. Drawing from our course readings, this paper should outline your vision of critical multicultural education. How should educators address issues of diversity, privilege and power? Describe three issues or lessons that you think are important to your vision of critical multicultural education. What changes should we make in schools to ensure that all children can be successful? Be specific and develop examples that describe the kinds of changes you are advocating for. You must directly cite at least five course readings in your paper. See detailed assignment guidelines and grading rubric (available in class). Important note: for those students moving on into the Teacher Education Program (TEP), this paper could be an artifact that you could save and submit with your teaching portfolio in the future.

6. **Final Project: Democracy, Reform and Activism in Education (30%)**: For this final project, you will research and profile one educational reform initiative that is creatively addressing the issues of diversity, power and privilege that we have discussed in the course. Possibilities include youth organizing initiatives, diversity curricula, teacher activism networks, school finance lawsuits, different educational reforms (i.e., charter schools, community schools etc.). You may choose to research a reform initiative in your area of interest (i.e., early childhood education, science education, etc.). Your final project should focus on issues of education, but need not be limited to strategies employed within formal schools.

You should prepare an in-class presentation (approximately 5-7 minutes in length) where you outline the reform and describe show how it addresses concerns of power, privilege and diversity. Your presentation may include PowerPoint, visual aids, or even a website that you design. You should also—using the analytic tools of this course—critically evaluate the initiative. What are its strengths and weaknesses? How does it contribute to social justice and equity in education? A central goal of this assignment is to build the skills that you may need—as a future educator—to critically evaluate educational reform efforts, and
advocate for initiatives that best meet the needs of students and families. A critical part of this assignment is also the role you will play as an audience member, in listening to your colleague’s presentations and posing thoughtful questions and comments. You will need to write up a brief one-page proposal on the initiative you propose to study no later than **********. More details will be available in class.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments for this class must be typed, double-spaced, and use 1 inch margins all around and 10-12 point font. In general, the following criteria apply for each assignment. More specific detail will be given in class.

A level work is clearly outstanding and reflects substantial effort. All aspects of the assignment are responded to in a cogent, organized and cohesive manner. Well-chosen, supportive examples and persuasive reasoning are utilized. There is an introduction, conclusion, and transition between sections. The mechanics of the paper are excellent – there are very few grammatical or spelling errors. The paper is handed in on time.

B level work is of high quality. Most of the aspects of the assignment are covered in an adequate and organized manner. Supportive examples are given and arguments are organized and sensible. There is a clear structure to the paper. The mechanics of the paper are good – there are some minor grammatical and/or spelling errors, but these do not detract substantially from the content of the paper. The paper is handed in on time, unless an extension is granted.

C level work is adequate. The author does address the main aspects of the assignment, although some are not covered thoroughly. Examples are given, but not developed fully. The paper lacks a clear organizational structure. The mechanics of the paper are poor. There are a number of grammatical and/or spelling errors. The paper may be late.

D level work and below is unsatisfactory. The paper shows serious weaknesses. The assignment is not addressed and/or the response is incoherent. There is little obvious structure to the paper. The mechanics of the paper are abysmal. There are frequent grammatical and/or spelling errors. The paper may be late.

Suggestions for written work:

- Carefully read the assignment guidelines and rubrics before you start writing. And make sure to re-read your paper before you hand it in. How would you score it on the rubric?

- Outline your assignments before writing them. This will help to ensure all aspects of the assignment are responded to.

- Proofread all work before it is handed in. Use spell and grammar check if these are available. If you are not a good proofreader, have a friend proofread your papers as well. Make sure your argument is clear and examples are provided. Watch out for abrupt transitions, run-on sentences, and sentence fragments. Make sure that quotes are well-integrated in the paper (not simply dropped in with no explanation). While you are proofreading, note the places in your paper where you respond to each aspect of the assignment.

- If you receive grades on your written work that you are not happy with, please talk with your instructor. You may also consider utilizing one the writing centers on campus, located at 2281 Faner Hall (453-6863),
the Computer Room in the lower level of Trueblood Hall (453-2927), and in the Computer room at 13 Lentz Hall (453-2573).

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY & PLAGIARISM

You are expected to take responsibility for the integrity and honesty of your academic work. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable. Academic dishonesty is defined as “any act that violates the rights of another student with respect to academic work or that involves misrepresentation of a student’s own work. It includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one’s own work anything done by another), submitting the same or substantially similar papers (or creative work) for more than one course without consent of all instructors concerned, depriving another of necessary course materials, and sabotaging another’s work.” Individuals suspected of academic misconduct will be handled according to established Southern Illinois University policies.

Over the last several years, we have had a growing problem with students plagiarizing papers for this class. The most common forms of plagiarism have been taking material from the Internet and handing it in as your own, or handing in papers that were written for this class by someone else. In this course, if you plagiarize any aspect of any of the written assignments, you will receive a grade of F for the assignment and, as appropriate, for the class. We reserve the right to ask you for an electronic copy of your work for any assignment. You are plagiarizing if:

- Most basically, you hand in work that someone else wrote.

- You use another person’s words, expressions or ideas in your writing without directly citing them by using quotation marks and an appropriate reference. A quotation is a word-for-word repetition of written or spoken language. Quotation marks directly before and after the material tell the reader these are the exact words of the source. Direct quotations must always include a reference with (in APA) the author’s last name, year of publication and page number. The page number can be given in parentheses at the end of the exact quotation or incorporated into the in-text citation.

- You paraphrase an author’s argument without providing an appropriate reference. Paraphrases and summaries are restatements of written or spoken language in your own words. In all cases, if you draw on someone else’s ideas in your paper, you must cite that source. It is important to clearly differentiate the parts of your paper that are not your own.

None of the papers for this class require you to do outside research. If you only cite material that we have read in class, you do not need footnotes or a reference page. You simply must put the last name of the author and the page number in parentheses at the end of a quote, or a paraphrased passage (include a date if there are multiple readings by that author). If you use additional material beyond the course readings or required books, you must include a works cited page, and a full bibliographic reference for each of the additional sources (you can use any citation style you like, e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

We want to make this course as accessible as possible to students with disabilities, temporary medical conditions, or mental or emotional health issues that may affect any aspect of course assignments or participation. I invite you to communicate with me at the beginning of the semester or at your discretion about any accommodations that will improve your experience of or access to the course. We can create an agreement to document accommodations. The Disability Student Services (DSS) office provides support and various services for students with disabilities. DSS is located in Woody Hall room B-150 and can be reached DSSsiu@siu.edu, 453-5738 (ph),
453-5700 (FAX), or 453-2293 (TTY). To best serve the student population, DSS requests that students contact the office at the beginning of the semester or at their earliest convenience. The Achieve Program also offers support (for a fee) to students with learning disabilities and can be reached at (618) 453-2369 or achieve@siu.edu.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available at: http://www.bert.siu.edu/. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location.

SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT

Please also see important guidelines, deadlines and resources in the University-wide syllabus attachment (included as the last page of the syllabus)
COURSE OUTLINE
Please Note: course schedules will vary by section