

Course: EDPL 634/0101, The School Curriculum

Semester: Fall 2003

Instructor: Dr. Steven Selden

Phones/fax/email: 405-3566 (o); Fax: 405 3573; ss22@umail.umd.edu

Days/Time: Monday, 7:00 – 9:45

Room: Benjamin 2119

Office hours: By appointment at student's convenience. Please call 301 405 3566.

I.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A Curricular Foundations course offering a critical analysis of the curriculum from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Includes a review of historical developments, an analysis of pressures affecting curriculum change and stasis, an examination of curriculum-making issues, and a consideration of current trends in curriculum design and practice.

II.

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE

August 19, 2003

Dear Friends,

In anticipation of our time together this semester I have taken a few moments this August to outline some thoughts regarding EDPL 634 for this fall. Of the many approaches that one may take to curriculum policy analysis, the *internalist* and the *externalist* are two well-respected venues. Where the internalist approach to curricular policy issues might ask, "how well are learners achieving in regards to the aligned curriculum's prespecified goals on high-stakes tests?" Our course, while profoundly interested in such policy questions, will focus on a slightly different policy discourse, that which ties curriculum to external contexts.

This fall we will take approach the curriculum as a socially embedded, ethical activity. More specifically, we will approach curriculum policies in the context of what Princeton University's Cornell West calls, "Gramscian accounts that link the rule of capital - the powers of transnational corporations, banks, and political elites - to the racial and gender-skewed ill-fed, ill-housed, and ill-clad." That is, we will challenge the prevailing assumption that exclusively internalist conceptions of the curriculum allow for productive curricular policies and practices.

In terms of its specific course goals, EDPL 634 is designed to assist students in understanding the role that these economic and political contexts play in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum. In addition, the course

is designed to develop students' ability to critically analyze curricular offerings at both the technical and ethical levels. This goal will be achieved through a consideration of the practical curriculum problems of school-corporate partnerships, and the commercialization of the curriculum.

In order to develop these critical, normative, and technical competencies, we will focus upon studies that link the *curriculum* to the issues of *capital* and *culture* with a focus on *commercialism* and *contestation*. In its broadest compass, EDPL 634 is designed to develop students' ability to pursue a question that have vexed curriculum scholars for decades - is the curriculum simply an instrument for social reproduction or can it be a contradictory site for socially transformative resistance?

Our topics and readings offer exciting opportunities for us as members of an academic community. They offer the possibility for meaningful discussions and insights and they should set the groundwork for a series of dynamic and engaging classes.

There you have it; an approach to the curriculum which focuses upon the relationship between curriculum studies and the political economy with an emphasis on the ethics of the market and the challenge of democratic schooling. In sum, a course directed toward developing students' critical, normative and technical competencies through careful analysis and spirited discussions of important issues - but not one aimed at correct answers of any ideological stripe.

I very much look forward to our class meetings.

Best,

Steven Selden
Professor

III. ***COURSE REQUIREMENTS***

Attendance and Assignments

Students are expected to attend all classes and to read all assigned materials. Class participation is strongly encouraged. Students are also asked to read the *New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, or *Education Week* during the semester, paying particular attention to articles focusing upon curriculum issues.

Students who are unable to attend class should contact the instructor prior to the next scheduled class to determine assignments and to obtain copies of any distributed materials. Professional student-faculty appointments are encouraged. Please call for mutually convenient times.

Accommodations For Students With Documented Disabilities

Students enrolled in EDPL 634 who have documented disabilities and who wish to discuss academic accommodations should contact the course instructor, if possible, during the first week of classes. Students requesting an accommodation should also contact the EDPL Chair, Dr. Ken Strike (301 405 3589), and the Office of Disability Support Services, (301-314-7682). That office will assist in determination and implementation of appropriate academic accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of learning. The university has approved a Code of Academic Integrity available on the web <http://www.inform.umd.edu/jpo/>.

The code prohibits students from cheating on the exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures.

Religious Observances

The University System of Maryland provides that students should not be penalized because of the observance of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.

NCATE Principal Certification Course Assignment

Consistent with ELCC guideline 3.5, students enrolled in EDPL 634 who are planning to apply for principal certification will also be required to develop a curriculum unit that reflects their county's curriculum alignment with the state framework as a required assignment for their portfolio. Attention must be paid to demonstrating an understanding of, and their capability to, align curricular goals and objectives with instructional goals and objectives and desired outcomes when developing scope, sequence, balance, etc.

Student Project – “Cereal Box Curriculum”

The past decade has seen an increasing commercialization of public spaces. Today we take it as natural, the UM Comcast Center, joint-venture cameras at traffic intersections, cereal boxes which promise school support, and schooling run by profit-making enterprises.

In order to create a finer cut on a specific way in which education and the space at the breakfast table have been linked and commercialized, students will be asked to present a “Cereal Box Curriculum” analysis. Students are to purchase a box of General Mills Cheerios cereal. Identify the commercial messages and tie-ins displayed on the box and review the General Mills site, <http://www.cheerios.com>.

Review the contents of the link <http://www.cheerios.com/familyfun/>. After carefully focusing on one of the links (“Spoonfuls of Stories,” “Cheerios Playroom,” “Nurturing Corner,” and “Store”), create a five-page critical analysis the link. The analysis should include a one-two page description and critique of the link, and two (2) lesson plans for a middle school social studies class designed to increase students' ability as thoughtful consumers. Please include an appendix of individual web pages that can be used to support your descriptions and plans. Copies of the analyses will be submitted to both the instructor and class members at our November 17, meeting.

IV.
STUDENT EVALUATION

Student grades in EDPL 634 will be determined by totaling the following items:

1. 10% of the course grade will be based on class participation.
2. 25% of the course grade will be based on an in-class midterm examination (October 20, 2003).
3. 30% of the course grade will be based on a “Cereal Box Curriculum” analysis (due November 17, 2003).
4. 5% of the final grade will be based on completed reading guides (due December 8, 2003).
5. 30% of the final grade will be based on an in-class final examination (to be taken on December 8, 2003).

C. Assignment/Schedule/Grade Record Keeper

<u>Due date</u>	<u>Assignment Length</u>	<u>Grade Weight</u>	
1. Every Class	Participation	as appropriate	10% ____
2. October 20, 2003	Midterm Examination	2.5 hours	25% ____
3. November 17, 2003	“Cereal Box Curriculum” analysis	5 pages	30% ____
4. Due December 8, 2003	Reading Guides	one page/reading	5% ____
5. December 8, 2003	Final Examination	2.5 hours	30% ____
Grade Total			100% ____

Examinations and class presentations will be evaluated on clarity of thought, appropriateness of content, analytic and synthetic strength, and creativity. Written responses are expected to follow an accepted writing style (e.g., APA, MLA, etc.).

Note: Students wishing to write a term paper in lieu of examinations should discuss this option with the instructor during the first two weeks of class.

V.
INSTRUCTOR/COURSE/TEACHING EVALUATION

In keeping with College of Education requirements, students will evaluate EDPL 634 using a nationally-normed course evaluation. The instrument allows for the addition of 15 student-selected items. Based upon student interest these items may be selected during the second class meeting. Copies of the evaluation summary will be mailed to all class participants.

VI.
CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

<i>Date</i>	<i>Concept and Assignment</i>
September 8, 2003	<p><u>Course Overview</u></p> <p><u>A. Commercialism and the Curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Channel One and <i>Driving for the Kids</i> Videotapes.• Preview “Easter at The White House” materials.• Discuss/describe “Cereal Box Curriculum” analysis• Commercialism and branded breakfast tables• Commercialism and branded persons• Commercialism and branded school• Commercialism and branded curriculum <p><u>B. The Curriculum as Contested Terrain</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Selective traditions2. Reproduction/Resistance3. Race/Class/Gender4. Political Economy5. Constructing a conservative curriculum policy<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Neo-Liberals: valorize markets, and see freedom = individual choiceb. Neo-Conservatives: wish for a return to discipline and traditional knowledgec. Authoritarian Populists: fundamentalist religious who desire theocratic schoolsd. New Middle Class: professional and managerial monitors of the above

EDPL 634 Course Schematic, Fall 2003
The Contested Terrain of the Curriculum

The focus of EDPL 634 will be to unpack the potential links between the political economy, the culture, and the curriculum. These relationships are not unidirectional. They are interactive and it is assumed that the tensions that form within and between levels and can be studied by considering various social formations. These can include gender, the workplace, the family, sexual orientation, or of greatest interest for us this semester, the contested terrain of the school curriculum.

A. Conceptual Level	B. Data Level	C. Contradictions	
1. Political Economy	<i>Material Goods</i>	Increasing Inequality	Decreasing Inequality
		Acquisition	Distribution
		CDF, "Tax cuts tilt toward the rich"	()
		Chrysler's "Drive for the Kids" Program	Reich, <i>I'll Be Short</i>
2. Culture	<i>Commercialization</i>	UMCP Comcast Sports Center	"Public" School
		Exclusive UMCP Contract with Pepsi Cola	"Public" Space
		Quart, <i>Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers</i>	()
		"Channel One" Classroom Current Events Television	()
		Chrysler's, "Drive for the Kids" Program	()
		Cheerios.com	"Cereal Box Curriculum"
3. Contested Terrain of the Curriculum	<i>Citizen's Worth</i>	Eugenic Fitter Family Contests	Reich, <i>I'll Be Short</i>
	<i>Commodified Curriculum</i>	<i>Bio-meritocracy</i>	<i>Social contract</i>
		Finn, September 11: What our children need to know	Apple, "Patriotism, Pedagogy, Curriculum Freedom: On the Educational Meaning of September 11"
	<i>Lived Curriculum</i>	Ravitch, <i>Language Police</i>	Apple, <i>The "Right" Way</i>
Dominant Narratives		Multivocalism	
Modernism		Postmodernism	

September 15, 2003

**Commercial Interests in the Thick of American Life:
Penetrating the Space of the Breakfast Table**

Students are to purchase a box of General Mills Cheerios cereal. Identify the commercial messages and tie-ins displayed on the box and review the General Mills site, <http://www.cheerios.com>.

Review the link <http://www.cheerios.com/familyfun/>. Focus on the “Spoonfuls of Stories,” “Cheerios Playroom,” “Nurturing Corner,” and “Store” links. Bring the cereal box to class.

Complete a one-page analysis of one link from the site (e.g., one toy from the store; activities from the nurturing corner; one game from the playroom). Please include a selection of the individual page addresses that you would like to share with the class. Copies of the analyses will be submitted to both the instructor and class members (copies for all).

Using portable laptop computers, student dyads will present specific commercial aspects of their chosen links. An LED projector will be available for our class meeting to allow you to bring these items to the class’ attention.

September 22, 2003

**Internalizing Commercial Interests: BrandedProducts -
Branded Persons**

Quart, A., (2002) *Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers*. Perseus Publishing.

September 29, 2003

Commercial Pressures and the Branded School

Molnar, A., (2002). *What’s in a name? The corporate branding of America’s schools, the fifth annual report on trends in schoolhouse commercialism*. Tempe, AZ: EPSL Commercialism in Education Research unit, 58 pp. <http://edpolicylab.org>

Review Channel One videotapes (1993-1994).

October 6, 2003

No Class (Reading Day/Cereal Box Curriculum Research /Preparation)

October 13, 2003

Commercial Interests and the Branded Curriculum

Consumers Union Education Series, (1995). *Captive kids: Commercial pressures on kids at school*. Yonkers: Consumers Union Education Services.

Review Chrysler's, "Drive for the Kids" videotape.

October 20, 2003	Midterm Examination
October 27, 2003	<u>The Contested Terrain of the Curriculum: Constructing the Meaning of September 11, 2001 for Classroom Consumption</u> Apple, M. W., (2002). "Patriotism, Pedagogy, and Freedom: On the Educational Meaning of September 11." http://www.tcrecord.org/PrintContent.asp?ContentID=10939 Finn, C., (2002), <i>September 11: What our children need to know</i> . Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. http://www.edexcellence.net/Sept11/September11.pdf
November 3, 2003	<u>Suturing Together a Conservative Public Agenda: Markets, Religion, Standards, and Inequality</u> Apple, M. W. (2001). <i>Educating the "right" way: Markets, standards, god, and inequality</i> . New York: Routledge/Falmer.
November 10, 2003	<u>The Neo-Conservative Critique of the Curriculum</u> Ravitch, D. (2003) <i>The Language Police: How Pressure Groups Restrict What Students Learn</i> . New York: Knopf Publishing Group.
November 17, 2003	<u>"Cereal Box Curriculum" Presentations</u> "Cereal Box Curriculum" analyses presented in class.
November 24, 2003	<u>The Role of the Curriculum in Legitimizing Social Inequality</u> Selden, S., (1999). "Eugenics and the social construction of merit, race, and disability." <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies Millennium Issue</i> , Volume 32, No. 2, pp. 235-252. For an outstanding analysis of eugenics also see Kevles, D. J., (1985). <i>In the name of eugenics: Genetics and the uses of human heredity</i> . New York: Alfred A Knopf. See also, Selden, S., (1999). <i>Inheriting shame: The story of eugenics and racism in America</i> . New York: Teachers College Press.
December 1, 2003	<u>Community and Commercialism: The Social Contract and Curriculum Policy</u> Reich, R. B. (2002). <i>I'll be short: Essentials for a decent working society</i> . Boston: Beacon Press.

Children's Defense Fund and Citizen's for Tax Justice (June 12, 2002). "Year-by-year analysis of the Bush tax cuts shows growing tilt toward the very rich." Washington, DC: Citizens for Tax Justice, 7 pp.
<http://www.childrensdefense.org/release020612.php>

December 8, 2003

Final Examination

VII.
COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY
EDPL 634
Fall 2003

Required Readings

- Apple, M. W., (2002). "Patriotism, Pedagogy, and Freedom: On the Educational Meaning of September 11."
<http://www.tcrecord.org/PrintContent.asp?ContentID=10939>
- Apple, M. W. (2001). *Educating the "right way: Markets, standards, god, and inequality.* New York: Routledge/Falmer.
- Children's Defense Fund and Citizen's for Tax Justice (June 12, 2002). "Year-by-year analysis of the Bush tax cuts shows growing tilt toward the very rich." Washington, DC: Citizens for Tax Justice, 7 pp.
<http://www.childrensdefense.org/release020612.php>
- Consumers Union Education Series, (1995). *Captive kids: Commercial pressures on kids at school.* Yonkers: Consumers Union Education Services. (Copy to be distributed in class).
- Finn, C., (2002), *September 11: What our children need to know.* Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
<http://www.edexcellence.net/Sept11/September11.pdf>
- Molnar, A., (2002). *What's in a name? The corporate branding of America's schools, the fifth annual report on trends in schoolhouse commercialism.* Tempe, AZ: EPSL Commercialism in Education Research unit. <http://edpolicylab.org>
- *Quart, A., (2003). *Branded: The buying and selling of teenagers.* Cambridge: The Perseus Group.
- *Ravitch, D. (2003). *The Language Police: How pressure groups restrict what students learn.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- *Reich, R. B. (2002). *I'll be short: Essentials for a decent working society.* Boston:

Beacon Press.

- + Selden, Steven, (1999). "Eugenics and the social construction of merit, race, and disability." *Journal of Curriculum Studies Millennium Issue*, Volume 32, No. 2, pp. 235-252.
- + Included in the EDPL 634 Course Packet. To be purchased from the Maryland Book Exchange. Located on Route One across from the Campus' North Gate.
- * To be purchased from the University of Maryland Bookstore or the Maryland Book Exchange.

Optional Reading

Apple, M. W., (2001). "Strange allies: Multicultural conservatism in America." (optional reading copy to be distributed in class).

"No Child Left Behind." Text of legislation available on the *Essential Questions* page of the *Foundations of Education Museum* <http://faculty.wm.edu/mkwhi2/wme/>

August 19, 2003