"When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.”
-- Adrienne Rich

Course Description:
Background, Goals, Vision, and Objectives

Though our society has always been diverse, that diversity has not been acknowledged in a positive light until very recently. In the last 100 years, that acknowledgement has come to the fore—the result of tireless democratic action on the part of social justice advocates and activists. As our societal diversity continues to grow (and, with it, concomitant social action to engender positive acknowledgement of it), schools become not only microcosms of this demographic diversity, but also reflect the multitude of belief systems and ways of knowing that children from increasingly diverse backgrounds bring to the classroom. As a result, teachers are being called upon to develop deep understandings about equity and diversity. The overall goal of the course is to support teacher candidates’ engagement in critical reflection around these key issues. While the discussion of teaching strategies for diversity may come up in a tangential fashion, the course will not focus on the development of such teaching strategies. Rather, the course will focus on the development of teacher candidates’ habits of mind for the equity and diversity challenges and opportunities they have and will continue to face.

Students in this course will examine a variety of theoretical frameworks that will serve as artifacts for class conversations about equity and diversity. Central to the work of the class is our ability to think deeply about our own experiences, values and understandings in light of the readings. This course seeks to connect the concept of diversity in the classroom with the goal of creating more equitable classroom practices that support student learning.

The ambitious learning outcomes for this course are that students will:
1) Develop an expanded concept of “diversity” and understand the connections between diversity and equity.
2) Develop a greater understanding and/ or ability to articulate their personal beliefs, values, attitudes and ideologies and explore how these influence the way teachers support and limit equity in their classrooms.
3) Develop the ability to create greater equity within their specific teaching contexts.

Essential Question Guiding this Course:
How can knowledge of self, schooling, and society influence pedagogical decision-making?
A Word about Perspective

This course, like all courses, has a point of entry into debate, something it wants to show you, a position, a perspective; it, like all courses, is not neutral or objective. Given this, it is important that you understand that you need not embrace the course perspective in order to be successful in it. You are strongly encouraged to be a critical thinker about everything in this course, including its perspective. You will be assessed based on the quality of your scholarship in this course. If you articulate perspectives contrary to the course’s and support those perspectives with scholarship in accordance to the course learning expectations you will be academically successful in the course. If you articulate perspectives in concert with the course’s but do not support your perspectives with scholarship in accordance with course learning expectations, you will not be academically successful in the course. You will be challenged to produce good scholarship. Your perspectives will be interrogated and supported as is appropriate to the course perspective, but assessment is predicated upon good scholarship regardless of your individual and/or the course’s perspectives.

Course Requirements

Required Text (needs to be purchased)


Given the nature of this course, success depends upon your engagement in inquiry, analysis, synthesis, reflection and respect of others. On average you should spend a minimum of six hours outside of class each week engaged in the following requirements:

Attendance and Participation (10 points)

You will be expected to attend all scheduled classes and to arrive on time. If you are unable to attend class for some documented emergency, you must contact me immediately. You will be expected to make-up the missed class with an activity/written assignment to be determined by me. You are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings and taken notes. Your notes must go beyond the basic level of comprehension and instead capture how the readings added to your knowledge or changed your thinking. No matter how much you may agree or disagree with the author’s perspective, force yourself to consider alternative perspectives, strengths, criticisms, or weaknesses. These notes should serve as a basis for your written assignments and will assist you in participating in class discussions thoughtfully, responsibly, and constructively.

You are expected to actively participate in class discussions, which means being willing to share with the class the insights and questions you have from the readings as well as keenly listening to others’ contributions. Your participation is important not only for your own growth and learning but also for the learning of others. Our discussions serve as a forum in which you can sharpen your thinking, test your ideas, exchange insights and perceptions with the instructor and with each other, and contribute towards others thinking. As a result, we must all try to work hard at providing opportunities for all perspectives to be voiced and listened to in order to maximize the learning potential of this course. We will all strive to be tolerant, patient, and respectful of diverse viewpoints.
Assignments:

1) School/Self-Portrait (10 points) Part I Due Feb.12, Part II Due May 7

As you begin your careers as teachers, it is important to understand the context about the school in which you work and how you might contribute towards supporting student learning in this context. It is also important to reflect on how your background and identity affect your participation as a member of the school community. Be sure to use evidence rather than assumptions in your analysis! Both parts should be uploaded to Canvas as PDF files.

Prepare a 4-5 page overview about your school.* This school/self portrait should include:

Part I: School Portrait (Due Feb.12)

• A brief history of the school
  o When was it founded and why?
  o How it has fared under recent reforms (e.g., is it a “failing school”?)
  o How have the demographics changed over the years?
• Information about the surrounding community of the school
  o Who lives in the community? (race, class, etc.)
  o What family/community/cultural assets (e.g., cultural norms, student interests, relevant experiences and resources) and challenges does the community have?
• Specialized features of your school or classroom setting (e.g., themed magnet, classroom aide, bilingual, team taught with a special education teacher, etc.)
• Student population
  o Who attends the school? (race, class, etc.)
  o How are students doing academically?
  o How are students doing socially/emotionally?
• Descriptions of the teaching population
  o Who teaches at the school? (race, class, years of experience, degrees, community members, etc.)
• Portrayal of the school culture
  o Vision (general goals of the school) and Mission (concrete ways that the school seeks to accomplish the vision) of the school
  o School facilities and resources
  o General “vibe” (level of collegiality, openness, welcome, family relations, etc.)

Part II: Self Portrait (Due May 7)

• A brief history of your schooling
• Information about the surrounding community of your school
• Comparison of your experiences in school with your current teaching context
• Analysis of what these differences/similarities mean for how you teach and interact with the school community (What are your strengths? What challenges will you face?)

*NOTE: I am open to this project taking a form different than a paper. For instance, students in the past have made video documentaries, written poetry, and created photo essays. If you are interested in any of these options or have another idea, get my stamp of approval before you begin and be sure that you attend to the requirements bulleted above.
2) **Response Papers** (5 points each – 45 points total) **Due Weekly**
There is a good deal of reading in this course and it is your responsibility to read the assigned selections for every class. Just completing the readings, however, is not enough to maximize your learning opportunities. It is therefore expected that you will complete a written response to an assigned prompt for each set of readings. These prompts will encourage you to analyze the readings in terms of your prior learning, personal experiences and class discussions. In these responses, it is expected that you will demonstrate both your understanding of the assigned readings, and also your reflections and opinions. Please limit your responses to 500 words. In addition to answering the prompt, you will also need to write a minimum of two discussion questions that I may choose to use as the basis of class discussion that day. The response papers are due by **NOON** before each class. Upload these to Canvas as PDF files.

3) **Leading Class Discussion of Readings** (10 points) **Due TBD**
During the course of the semester you will work with two partners to take responsibility for creating and enacting a lesson plan that fills 60-90 minutes about one of the weekly topics. When it is your week to present, you must read the Optional Readings. **Your lesson plan is due the Friday before you are scheduled to facilitate.** One group member should email it to me as a PDF and I will send you feedback by Monday so you can make any changes by Wednesday.

**Lesson Plan**
- 1-2 pages (not including handouts)
- Includes learning and academic language objectives, detailed description of activities, problem-posing questions, and identification of informal assessments that will be used (what will you be listening/ looking for to gauge student understanding)

**Lesson**
- Well-organized/articulated
- Encourages student participation/involvement
- Effective use of hand-outs/audio-visual aids/technology
- Encouraged a wide range of perspectives about the readings and associated topics
- Left the class with unresolved dichotomies, unanswered questions, and engaged in continuing critical thought about the reading
- Balanced involvement of all group members

**Lesson Reflection**
- 500 word limit reflection emailed within 24 hours after lesson
- Articulates what went well, what could have gone better, what went differently than anticipated, what you would change, what surprised you, etc.

4) **Equity Inquiry Paper** (20 points) **Part I Due Feb.26, Part II Due May 7**
Your final project is to complete a paper analyzing a dilemma that you face in your teaching practice. The dilemma should represent a challenge you face in creating an equitable classroom. Since dilemmas cannot be solved, the purpose of this paper is NOT to find an “answer” to your dilemma. Instead, the purpose of the paper is for you to analyze the dilemma from new perspectives. Those new perspectives should reflect the concepts and theories from the syllabus, as well as discussions we’ve had in class. You do not need to cite all of the literature from the course, but you should cite literature relevant to your new understanding of your classroom dilemma.
Equity Dilemma Sketch  **February 26**

Bring to class written summaries of at least two ideas for a dilemma. You will discuss them with your Critical Friends group during class. Throughout the semester, these Critical Friends will help each other with their Equity Paper projects.

**Final Equity Paper (20 points) May 14**

The paper should be organized in three major sections:

A. **Introduction**
   - (2-3 pages) Introduce the dilemma you face, describing it thoroughly and making any pertinent connections to your School/Self profile. What is your dilemma and why did you decide to focus on this particular issue?

B. **Analysis**
   - (5-6 pages) Use the readings and concepts from class to reexamine your original understanding of the dilemma, as well as submit alternative understandings of the dilemma given what you have learned in the course. What are potential explanations for the dilemma’s causes? Who is it affecting? What evidence do you have of its causes and effects?

C. **Next Steps**
   - (2-3 pages) highlight what new actions you will be taking given your new understandings of the dilemma. What resources will you tap as you try to address this problem? What steps will you take? Again, this isn’t about “solving” the dilemma; rather, it’s about trying something new and understanding the potential positive outcomes, as well as considering the unintended potential negative consequences.

The final paper should be approximately 9-12 pages in length, double-spaced, Times New Roman with one inch margins. It should also use the conventions of APA style. Please submit it as a PDF to Canvas. The paper will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Clarity of equity dilemma description
- Depth of equity dilemma analysis
- Accuracy of application of concepts from readings
- Appropriateness of next steps
- Writing conventions including application of APA style

Plan to email a copy of the complete draft to your Critical Friends no later than **Wednesday, April 30**. Each person will email feedback to each other.

The final project is then due no later than **May 14 at 11:59pm**. Upload your final project to Canvas as a PDF file.

**5) Presentation (5 pts) Due May 7**

On the final day of class, students will share either their Equity Dilemma or their School/Self Portrait in a 5-minute presentation. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how your thinking has been deepened/challenged by this class. The presentation can be more traditional or more creative, but should focus on professional/personal growth and development this semester.
Grades

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments and point system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/Self Portrait</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers (13x5pts)</td>
<td>45 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading the Class Discussion of Readings</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity Inquiry Paper</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>5 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 pts</strong></td>
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Please be advised that you must complete every assignment to pass the course; that is, you can not simply chose to not do something and take the corresponding point reduction.

Grading Scale:

- **A+** 99+  
- **A** 94-98  
- **A-** 90-93  
- **B+** 87-89  
- **B** 83-86

(A+ will be given if a student has 99 or 100 points, has made substantive contributions in each class based on readings, and has demonstrated extraordinary insight and grasp of the literature in writing work and presentations. Full credit for class participation will be given only for weekly, on-time attendance and contributions – in class and large group/small group discussions - based on readings. The instructors urge students to be participatory in class discussions and show evidence of having read and grasped course content. Students can receive partial credit for make-up work on unavoidable absences.)

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

The university has approved a Code of Academic Integrity available on the web at [www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Depatments/jpo/code_acinteg.html](http://www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Depatments/jpo/code_acinteg.html). The code prohibits you from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The code strives to promote a “community of trust” on our campus.

**Equal Educational Opportunity Policy Statement**

In accordance with federal, state, local, university, and the college of education laws, access to equal educational opportunity based on race; ethnicity; geographic origin; language; socioeconomic class; sex and gender; gender identity and expression; sexual orientation; physical, developmental, and psychological ability; religious, spiritual, faith-based, or secular affiliation; age and generation; and physical appearance, among other categories of social identity, is paramount. Every effort will be made to arrange for reasonable accommodations to ensure that such opportunity exists and is measurable in terms of equality of outcome.
Course Schedule (Revised 11.28.2014)

Please note the following dates when class will meet online: Feb.5, Feb.19, and April 2. These will be asynchronous meetings. The online tasks can be completed any time during the week as long as they are done by midnight on Wednesday when class would normally meet in-person.

WEEK 1/January 29 (F2F)
Essential Question: What is this class about? How will it unfold?


Assignments Due Today: Educational Issues Survey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HXPRIXX) and Politics Compass Test (http://www.politicalcompass.org/test) - please bring your printed test results to class.

WEEK 2/February 5 (*ONLINE*)
Essential Questions: How have we historically constructed difference in U.S. schools? How are schools currently structured around difference? What forces are shaping how we organize schools and identify difference?

KEY TERMS: Eugenics, Neoliberalism, School-to-Prison Pipeline, Tracking

Reading Due Today:


ReMu Chapter 5: The Forgotten History of Eugenics by Alan Stoskopf


**WEEK 3/ February 12 (*ONLINE*)**

**Essential Questions:** *What is success? Who is labeled as successful? Why? Who is not? Why?*

**KEY TERMS:** Achievement Gap, Meritocracy

**Readings Due Today:**


ReMu Chapter 7: Race and the Achievement Gap by Harold Berlak

“Chapter 8: What Can We Do to Close the Gap?” from Boykin, W.A. & Noguera, P. (2011). *Creating the opportunity to learn: Moving from research to practice to close the achievement gap.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.


**Assignments Due Today:** Part I of School/Self Portrait

**WEEK 4/ February 19 (F2F)**

**Essential Questions:** *What is in our “hidden curriculum”? How do our values and beliefs shape our students’ experiences?*

**KEY TERMS:** Hidden Curriculum, Intersectionality, Microaggression, Multiculturalism, Oppression

**Readings Due Today:**


**WEEK 5/ February 26 (F2F)**

**Essential Questions:** What is “smart”? How do we identify who is smart and who is not? What are the consequences of doing so? What is “disabled”? How do we identify who is disabled and who is not? What are the consequences of doing so?

**KEY TERMS:** Disability, Gifted

**Readings Due Today:**


**Assignments Due Today:** Equity Dilemma Sketch

**WEEK 6/March 5 (F2F)**

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:** What is sexual identity? How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by sexual identity? How is schooling organized around sexual identity? What are the consequences of this organization?

**KEY TERMS:** Bisexual, Heterosexual, Heteronormativity/Heterosexism, Homosexual, Homophobia, Lesbian, LGBTQ, Queer

**Readings Due Today:**


**OPTIONAL READING:**

WEEK 7/March 12 (F2F)

Essential Questions: What is gender? How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by gender? How is schooling organized around gender? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: Cisgender, Intersex, Sexism, Transgender, Transsexual

Readings Due Today:


OPTIONAL READING:

Week 8/March 19 [SPRING BREAK – Woohoo!]

WEEK 9/March 26: Race (F2F)

Essential Questions: What is race? How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by race? How has and how is schooling organized around race? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: (De)segregation, Ethnicity, Model Minority, People of Color, Race, White Privilege

Readings Due Today:
Buehler, J. (2012). ‘There’s a problem, and we’ve got to face it’: How staff members wrestled with race in an urban high school. Race, Ethnicity & Education, 16(5), 629-652.
ReMu Chapter 3: What Do We Need to Know Now? by Asa G. Hilliard III

ReMu Chapter 4: Diversity vs. White Privilege (An Interview with Christine Sleeter)

ReMu Chapter 22: You’re Asian – How Could You Fail Math? (Unmasking the Model Minority Myth) by Benji Chang & Wayne Au

ReMu Chapter 30: Race – Some Teachable (and Uncomfortable) Moments by Heidi Tolentino


Report finds over half of Maryland’s Black students attend intensely segregated schools. (2013). The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles.

OPTIONAL READING:


WEEK 10/April 2: Race – Ethnicity (F2F)
Essential Questions: What is ethnicity? What is the relationship between ethnicity and immigration? How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by ethnicity? How is schooling organized around ethnicity? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: Discrimination, Ethnicity, Globalization, Immigration, Subtractive Schooling

Readings Due Today:


OPTIONAL READINGS:

WEEK 11/April 9: Language (F2F)
Essential Questions: How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by language? How is schooling organized around language? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: Bilingual Education, Code Switching, Ebonics, English Language Learners, Standard Academic English

Readings Due Today:
NCTE Policy Research Brief on English Language Learners:


ReMu Chapter 11: Taking A Chance With Words (Why Are All the Asian American Kids Silent In Class?) by Carol A. Tateishi

ReMu Chapter 12: Black English/Ebonics (What It Be Like?) by Geneva Smitherman

ReMu Chapter 14: Defending Bilingual Education by Kelley Dawson Salas

OPTIONAL READING:
ReMu Chapter 13: Ebonics and Culturally Responsive Instruction by Lisa Delpit
ReMu Chapter 15: Bilingual Education Works by Stephen Krashen

WEEK 12/April 16: NO CLASS (SCHOOL DISTRICT SPRING BREAK)

WEEK 13/April 23 (F2F)
Essential Questions: What is social class? How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by social class? How is schooling organized around social class? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: Classism, Culture of Poverty, Social Class


Optional Reading:


WEEK 14/April 30 (F2F)
How have and how are students’ experiences in schools affected by religion? How is schooling organized around religion? What are the consequences of this organization?

KEY TERMS: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Illiberalism

ReMu Chapter 20: Arranged Marriages, Rearranged Ideas by Stan Karp


WEEK 15/May 7 (Last Class) (F2F)

Essential Question: Now what? How can I be an advocate for my students? What is equity literacy?


Assignments Due: Presentation and School/Self Portrait.

NOTE: Your final papers are due by 11:59pm on May 14.