Instructor: David Imig  
Office Hours: By appointment  
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Course Goal: The goal of this course is to develop an understanding of the profession of teaching, teacher leadership, and the knowledge base that undergirds the teaching profession. Students will examine their own definitions and understandings of teaching as a profession and explore extra-classroom activities that promote collegiality and professionalism. Learning from and sharing with your peers is central to this course as we seek to promote teacher leadership.

Course Objectives:  
1. Gain understanding of the current debate over whether teaching is a profession or “something else” and why this has importance for the day-to-day work of teachers.  
2. Gain understanding of the multiple perspectives on teaching in the current debate on school reform – and how they are aligned across the political spectrum,  
3. Gain understanding of the past efforts to build a profession of teaching and the challenges to those efforts.  
4. Gain understanding of the promise of teacher leadership as a means to realize professionalism in teaching.  
5. Develop an understanding of the contemporary and historical forces for change in teaching.  
6. Examine your own teaching practice from the perspective of this course and learn from the perspectives of others.

Course Topics: Teacher leadership; teacher professionalism; professional development; professional learning communities and lesson study; action research; the professionalization of teaching; accountability; responsibility; the politicalization of teaching; issues of teacher compensation and performance; promotion and tenure for teachers; unionization and collective bargaining; school staffing and differentiated staffing; teacher collaboration.

Blackboard: This course will rely on a Blackboard site to which you will be given access. Blackboard is located at https://elms.umd.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp

Requirements:  
1. Attend all face-to-face classes and participate actively in class discussions in those classes as well as in those classes delivered on-line.  
2. Be a collaborative participant in the class – each of your experiences as teacher leaders is important and contribute to the class in a way that lets us learn from one another.  
3. Participate in the five face-to-face class meetings. In addition to face-to-face participation, ten of the class sessions will be structured as asynchronous lessons. Each of these sessions will focus on a different query. These queries will be posted on BlackBoard. Everyone must respond to that query with a thoughtful and well constructed post. Then, everyone must respond to two classmates within a second time frame. Finally, you will reply to at least one comment that a classmate has made about your original post.  
4. Complete all course assignments including three essays.
Create a journal (that may be attached or included in your professional portfolio) that is a semester long documentation of your participation/involvement/engagement/leadership in a school, district, state, national, and/or professional organization.

**Attendance:** Class participation is expected. Since this course will be taught in a blended format, combining face-to-face meetings with web-based instruction, being actively engaged in both forums is essential and will be considered in the final grading. University policy excuses the absence of students for illness (self or dependent), religious observances, participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control. Students must request the excuse in writing and supply appropriate documentation. If at all possible, the instructor should be notified in advance of an anticipated absence.

**Accommodation:** If you have a documented disability or other learning need and you would like accommodations, please contact us as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

**Participation and Professionalism:** Students are expected to honor the code of academic integrity for the University of Maryland ([http://www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu)) on all matters pertaining to class participation and fulfillment of class expectations. The code stresses the importance of knowing “the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism.”

**Assignments:**

1. **Each week,** read at least one story on-line ([http://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html](http://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html)) or in hard-copy of *Education Week* on teachers or teaching and submit a 1-2 page summary via email to the instructor with ways the story relates to our class, your work, and your understanding of teacher leadership and teaching as a profession. **Due: Weekly.**

2. **Each week,** read the assigned readings and post a critical review: **Due: Weekly**

   a. Read the assigned readings and respond to 2-3 of the posted questions with a thoughtful and carefully constructed response. *What is the “take-away” from the readings? What theories or perspectives are used? What research evidence is used? Is the argument well constructed? Are there alternative readings that should be considered?* Post your response before midnight on the Monday before the scheduled class.

   b. Add to the comments or responses of at least two of your classmates on the Blackboard Discussion Board before midnight on the Tuesday before the scheduled class.

   c. Reply to a minimum of one classmate’s comments about your original posting before midnight on the Wednesday before the scheduled class.

3. **Essay #1:** A 5-7 page written critique of the Department of Education’s RESPECT Project. Show familiarity with the proposed initiative. Use the concepts discussed in Units 1-5 to examine the Department’s proposal and to discuss whether you believe this is a viable proposal that deserves your support. Would you “sponsor” this proposal at your school or in your district? If you were to do so, how would you engage your colleagues in a meaningful discussion? **Due: October 4th.**
(4) Essay #2: A 5-7 page written critique of the Model Teacher Leader Standards. Show familiarity with the proposed standards. Use the concepts discussed in Units 6-12 to critique the model standards. Discuss whether the concept of professionalism is compatible with the notions of teacher leadership as presented in the Model Standards. Due: November 1st.

(5) Essay #3: A 7-10 page final paper that argues either for or against the proposition that teaching is a profession. Consider the concepts highlighted in the entire course. Use Sullivan’s thesis to frame your argument. Prepare a 20 minute oral presentation to be given on the last day of class. Due: December 5th

(6) Journal/log: Maintain a journal throughout the semester that documents your extra classroom activities and analyzes your involvement in them. Such participation may include any or all of the following: (1) participation in or leadership of a school committee planning a teacher professional workday, (2) participation in or leadership of a school curriculum or subject area task force or committee, (3) participation in or leadership of a committee addressing matters of inclusion, diversity, parental involvement or community outreach, (4) participation in or leadership of a committee of MSTA, MSDE or another professional organization, or (5) other involvement or leadership in activities beyond the classroom that promote collegiality and professionalism. Due: December 7th

Grading: Grades of A-D will be awarded based on the following criteria: (1) attendance at the face-to-face class sessions, (2) participation in the discussion board and on issues raised in class, (3) completion of assignments, (4) completion of the midterm & final work products. All written assignments are to be completed on time and submitted via email to the instructor. All written work will be held to high standards and should conform to proper grammar, usage, punctuation and spelling.

Participation and assignments will be weighted according to the following:
Weekly Education Week summary 10%
Weekly written postings & critiques 30%
Essay #1 15%
Essay #2 15%
Essay #3 (Final) 25%
Journal 5%

Readings:
Students should purchase


Most other course readings will be provided on Blackboard.

Class Schedule:

August 30 Unit 1: Overview of Course and Discussion of Professionalism
(CLASS MEETING)

1. Course overview
2. Introductions
3. Defining Teacher Leadership
   a. What are Teacher Leaders?
   b. What are the Boundaries of Teacher Leadership?
   c. What is the Connection between Teacher Leadership and Teacher Professionalism?
4. Developing a Definition of Professionalism
   a. Are Teachers Professionals? Is Teaching A Craft or a Profession? Is Teaching Different from Medicine and Law? How is It Different? How is It Similar?
   b. How do Shulman and Darling-Hammond Define a Profession?
   c. What are the Traits, Behaviors and Characteristics of a Professional Teacher?
5. Reflection and Agenda Setting

Required Reading:


Supplementary Readings:


September 6th
Unit 2: The Teaching Profession—Overview & History (CLASS MEETING)

1. The size, scope, legal status and compensation of the teaching profession in America.
2. The history of the teaching profession in America.
   a. Can feminized occupations be recognized as professions?
   b. Why is teaching so female dominated?
3. Should teaching be like the other professions? (The appeal of “similitude”.)
4. Organizing the teaching profession

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


**Assignments:**
Article from *Education Week*
Journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

**September 13th**

Unit 3: Contemporary School Reform Efforts: Why Good Teaching Is At the Center of the Debate (Blackboard)

1. What is the Evidence that Good Teaching Matters?
2. What is Good Teaching?
3. Can (Should) the Government Define Good Teaching?
4. Is it Good Teaching or Good Teachers? Are They the Same?
5. What does Teacher Professionalism have to do with Good Teaching?
6. Are Good Teachers Good Teacher Leaders?

**Required Reading:**


**Supplemental Readings:**


Assignments:
Article from *Education Week*
Journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

September 20th       Unit 4: What Do Teachers Need To Know, Believe & Be Able To Do?
                      What is the Knowledge Base for Teaching? (Blackboard)

1. How Much Subject Matter Knowledge Should Teachers Possess?
2. What is Pedagogical Content Knowledge and How is it Different from Subject Matter Knowledge?
3. What Should Teachers Know About Student Learning?
4. What Classroom Management Skills Must Teachers Possess?
5. Are there a set of beliefs that teachers must possess?
6. What is the debate about alternative routes to teaching?

Required Reading:


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:
Article from *Education Week*
Journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

September 27th       Unit 5: The Challenge of Teaching in Today’s Schools: Trust and Responsibility, Ethical Behavior and the Social Compact (Class Meeting)

1) Have teachers lost the trust of parents and the public?
2) What is the concept of trust and why is it important?
3) Can you measure trust?
4) Are schools built on trusting relationships?

Required Readings:


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:

Article from *Education Week*
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

October 4th Unit 6: The Context for Public School Teaching: Public Obligation and the Public Trust (BlackBoard)

1. To Whom are Public School Teachers Accountable?
2. What are the Boundaries of Teacher Accountability? Are these Appropriate?
3. Can Parent and Public Interests Conflict?

Required Readings:


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:

Article from Education Week
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

October 11th

Unit 7: Where is Professional Development in the Quest for Teacher Professionalism? (Class Meeting)

1) Is the way that your district and school “do” professional development compatible with your understanding of professional development?
2) Are the standards of the National Staff Development Council represented in the way that professional development is provided to you? Is it continuous and focused on both your personal development and your career advancement?
3) What are the forms of professional development that seem most engaging and have benefit to teachers?

Required Readings:


Assignments:

Article from Education Week
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

October 18th

Unit 8: Autonomy and Freedom in Teaching (Tenure and the Role of Standards and Accountability) (Blackboard)

1. Should Public School Teachers Have Tenure Rights?
2. If so, how should they gain those rights?
3. Is the Claim of Teacher Autonomy Warranted? Must Teachers Enjoy Autonomy to Claim Professional Status?
4. What is Academic Freedom? How Does it Apply to K-12 Teachers?
5. Should Teachers Be Accorded the Right of Privileged Speech? Why? How?

Required Readings:


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:
Article from Education Week
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

October 25th  Unit 9: Does Teaching Have a Code of Conduct that Shapes the Ethical Behavior of Teachers (Social Compacts and Stewardship) (Class Meeting)

1) What is the relationship between ethics and professionalism?
2) What are examples of ethical principles to guide teachers in the classroom? In the school? In the community?
3) What impact have the ethical scandals of the last few years had on teaching being recognized as a profession? How endemic is “teacher cheating”?
4) Could the profession enforce a code of conduct? How would they do so?

Required Readings:
NEA Code of Ethics found at http://www.nea.org/home/30442.htm


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:
Article from Education Week
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

November 1st  Unit 10: Teacher Leadership and School Change (CLASS MEETING)

1. Can teacher leadership be a constructive force for the transformation of schools?
2. What roles should teacher leaders assume within schools?
3. What roles for teacher leaders beyond the classroom?
4. What are AFT and NEA doing to promote teacher leadership?

Required Readings:

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (2007) Key Issues: Enhancing Teacher


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:
Article from Education Week
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

November 8th  Unit 11: Moving from “Classical” Definitions to “Emerging” Definitions of Teacher Professionalism (Blackboard)

1. What are the emerging definitions of a new teaching profession?
2. How does the RESPECT Initiative respond to these developments?
3. Why is this “the” topic of so much attention in Europe and Australia?
4. Is there something in the way the Europeans are defining professionalism that is applicable to the American scene?
5. Teacher collegiality is difficult to define and even harder to measure – why?

Required Readings:


Assignments:
Article from Education Week
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

November 15th  Unit 12: Building a Powerful Profession: The Role of the Unions and a Unified Profession (Blackboard)

1. Is it important for teachers to be organized?
2. How should the teaching profession be organized?
3. Do teacher unions serve the interests of practicing teachers? Do they serve the interests of the public?
4. Describe the protests and demonstrations in Madison in January 2011. What is the conservative argument against teacher unions? Can public employee unions serve the interests of the public and the profession?
5. What venues can teacher leaders perform in other than schools?

Required Readings:


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:

Article from *Education Week*
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond 2-3 discussion questions

November 22th: Unit 13: Control Over Access to Teaching (Blackboard)

1. Should the Profession have a Role in Determining Access to Teaching? Who Controls Entry? Who Should Control Entry?
2. Teacher Licensure – PRAXIS, Pearson and the Future of Teacher Testing
3. Teacher Performance Assessment – what is the State of the Art? Is there a Research Base?
4. Teacher Performance Assessment – is there a research base?

Required Readings:


**Supplemental Readings:**


**Assignments:**

Article from *Education Week*
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

**November 29th**

**Unit 14: Understanding the Promise of Teaching as a Profession.**

(Blackboard)

1) What is the future of teaching?
2) What will teaching be like in 2052?
3) How will schools and teaching and student learning change?

**Required Readings:**


Supplemental Readings:


Assignments:
Article from *Education Week*
Self-reflexivity journal entry
Respond to 2-3 discussion questions

December 5th : Unit 15: Final Paper Presentation (CLASS MEETING)

1. Does Sullivan’s thesis still apply to teaching and the teaching profession? Can professionalism be a viable ethic for the future of school teaching?
2. Can teaching be recognized as a profession? Can teaching reclaim the mantle of professionalism?
3. What will it take for teaching to be according the status of a profession?
4. What would teacher leaders do to advance the cause of professionalism?