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Course Description

An examination of the most pressing policy issues confronting elementary and secondary education as seen from the perspective of the educational, political, economic and social frameworks within which teachers teach. Topics include academic standards and assessment, school choice, educational technologies, character education, and school finance. Particular attention is devoted to the debate over the purposes of education in an era of globalization and the governance issues raised by the standards-based reform movement in American education.

EDU 500 is a three credit course which is intended to provide students with an introduction to the American educational system and the range of viewpoints that surround the critical issues teachers will face within the context of their careers. Hence, the instructor assumes that students possess little if, if any, formal background in regard to these topics.

Successful completion of this course is a prerequisite for official admittance into the Masters' program. Please note that a student must earn a grade of B or better in this course in order for it to count toward fulfillment of the requirements of the Masters' program.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will have demonstrated the following the skills and aptitudes:

1. The ability to explain and evaluate the public policy agendas underlying conservative and liberal approaches to education.
2. The ability to discuss how the standards-based reform movement in education is affecting the system's governance structure, the nature of educational policies and the character of the teaching profession.
3. The ability to discuss the nature of globalization and the impact that this process is having in regard to the debate over the purposes of elementary and secondary education.
4. The ability to write analytic essays using concepts, theoretical frameworks, and empirical evidence consistent with the norms and conventions that characterize scholarly research on elementary and secondary education.

Assessment

Student performance in regard to the learning objectives will be evaluated on the basis of a student's level of engagement in the class and a student's performance on three take-home exercises. There will not be a final exam in this course.

Class engagement will be evaluated on the basis of a rubric focusing upon a student's preparation for class as indicated by the quality of a student's contributions to class discussions. In preparation for each class, students are expected to complete the required readings, guided by the discussion questions assigned by the instructor. Students are expected to bring the text to each class and to be prepared to discuss the issues raised by the discussion questions.

Students are permitted to supplement their in-class contributions by submitting written responses to discussion questions on a weekly basis. However, written submissions are not intended to be a substitute for active and engaged participation in the classroom. Such submissions must be typed, single spaced, paginated and stapled together. Citations should be provided as appropriate. Submissions will be reviewed, but not graded per se, by the instructor.

Grade	Course Engagement Criteria
A	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends to participate in class discussions on a regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> Contributions tend to explicitly cite materials presented in the readings.
B	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to participate in class discussions on a regular basis, but does tend to submit written responses to discussion questions on a weekly basis. <input type="checkbox"/> Submissions tend to explicitly discuss materials presented in the readings.
C	<input type="checkbox"/> Class contributions tend not to explicitly cite materials presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to submit written responses to discussion questions on a regular basis.
O	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not participate in class discussions. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not submit written responses to discussion questions.

An Example of a Weekly Discussion Question:

New York State's approach to multicultural education (p. 303) aspires to "look beyond ethnic particularism [by examining] differences in light of universal human characteristics." Could the case be made that the principles which serve as the foundation for the Liberal tradition – as reflected for example in the *Declaration of Independence* – are well-suited to the accomplishment of this task? Critics contend that these principles are not timeless and universal, but rather are an artifact of a historically-contingent cultural formation which can be classified as the "Anglo-American model." By implication, does the multicultural critique of this model extend to the Progressive tradition in education?

All written work in the course will be evaluated on the basis of rubrics which focus upon (1) a student's command of content and (2) a student's ability to apply grammatical rules and conventions properly. The quality of each assignment's content and presentation will be evaluated separately. However, only the content grade is factored into the calculation of a student's final grade for the course.

Grade	Content Criteria
A	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently addresses questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently cites specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; rarely relies simply upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
B	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends to address questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends to cite specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; relies somewhat upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence..
C	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to address questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to cite specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; tends to rely heavily upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
D	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely addresses questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely cites specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; relies almost exclusively upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
F	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to address the questions at all; submission is more than six days late.

Grade	Presentation Criteria
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing is generally free of grammatical errors and typographical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Errors that do appear do not tend to either distract or confuse the reader. <input type="checkbox"/> Submission consistently adheres to the APA format.
Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing contains a noticeable number of grammatical and spelling errors <input type="checkbox"/> Errors tend to both distract and confuse the reader. <input type="checkbox"/> Submission does not consistently adhere to APA format.

Final submissions of all written work must be typed, double spaced, paginated and stapled together. Please use the APA format for all assignments. The following site constitutes a convenient place to find reliable information about this style: www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Students also are strongly encouraged to make use of the assistance and resources available through the Writing Center maintained by the Office of Academic Services (109 Curtis Hall).

Students are expected to submit a hard copy of written work directly to the instructor at the designated due date and time. However, if this is not possible, exercises may be submitted electronically via e-mail (formatted as a Word 2007 attachment) or by fax (610-606-4614). In all cases, students bear full responsibility for ensuring that such submissions reach the instructor by the scheduled due date. Late submissions will not be accepted except in the case of an extenuating personal circumstance that can be verified by college personnel.

Students will be given an opportunity to revise and resubmit the first two take-home exercises per the substantive comments and editorial corrections provided by the instructor. Tutorial assistance available through the Writing Center can be used for this purpose. Revisions should be submitted within seven days from the date the exercises were returned to students. Revisions should be submitted electronically via e-mail as a Word attachment with all corrections noted in boldface. Generally, resubmissions will result in a half-letter grade increase in regard to content.

Plagiarism is a legally punishable offense, a serious breach of academic and professional ethics, as well as an egregious violation of the college's Honor Code. Documented cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of "zero" for the assignment in question.

Class Conduct

To maintain an environment conducive to learning, everyone is expected to arrive on time for class, act with respect toward other students and refrain from behavior that could serve to disrupt the class or infringe upon the rights of other members of the class. Students also are expected to abide by the letter and spirit of the college's Honor Code

The instructor will adhere to the Code of Ethics established by the American Political Science Association, as these principles relate to a faculty member's responsibilities in the classroom and to students. Given the nature of this course, the instructor is mindful of his obligation:

- To not impose partisan views, conventional or otherwise, upon students.
- To faithfully represent the normative values, policy positions, and academic work of others.
- To respect and defend the intellectual freedom and procedural rights of students.
- To evaluate the performance of students equitably on the basis of criteria which are applied uniformly and in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with the instructor during the first week of classes. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center. Students wishing to arrange an incomplete for the course should discuss this option with the instructor prior to the end of the semester.

Required Texts

T.L. Friedman (2007) *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Release 3.0 (Picador, 0-312-42507-4)

H. Gardner (2006) *Five Minds for the Future* (Harvard Business School Press, 978-1-59139-912-4)

J.L. Nelson, S.B. Palonsky and M.R. McCarthy (2007) *Critical Issues in Education: Dialogues and Dialectics* (McGraw Hill, 007-323009-X)

Spring, Joel (2005) *Political Agendas for Education: From the Religious Right to the Green Party*, 3rd edition (Erlbaum, 0-08058-5257-3)

Weekly Outline

Aug 28:	Education and Democracy	(N1)
Sep. 4:	Social Conservatives & Neo-Conservatism	(S1/2)
Sep. 11:	New Democrats & Progressivism	(S3/4)
Sep. 18:	The Academic Achievement Gap	(N, 227-67)
Sep. 25:	The Standards-based Reform Movement	(N5)

Exercise #1 – Due October 2nd

Oct. 2:	Globalization and Education	(F1-4, 6-9)
Oct. 9:	Technology and Education	(N12)
Oct. 16:	School Choice & Educational Markets	(N37-80)
Oct. 23:	Privatization & Entrepreneurship	(N7/8)
Oct. 30:	Adequacy, Equity & School Finance	(N3)

Exercise #2 – Due November 6th

Nov. 6:	Globalization & Learning Outcomes	(G 1-7)
Nov. 13:	Assessment & Standardized Testing	(N13)
Nov. 20:	Standards & Specialized Education	(N17/4)
Nov. 27:	No Class	
Dec. 4:	Character Education & Multiculturalism	(N10/11)

Exercise #3 – Due December 4th