

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Eric Rofes

Class Location: Coles Tower, Whiteside Room, 16th Floor
Time: Wednesdays 6-9 pm

Office: Ashby House 32
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-1:00 and Wednesdays 3:30-5 or by appointment
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Education 303 will meet once a week for three hours. The class will explore a range of issues related to teaching and learning in classrooms. Each student will be assigned to a local classroom which they will visit for at least 3 hours per week for 10 weeks during the semester. This classroom will serve as a site for our semester-long investigation of pedagogy, teaching and learning, subject areas, texts and standards, and curriculum theory and practice.

Education 303 attempts to grapple with a number of critical questions facing new teachers entering classroom life:

- o Is it possible for curriculum to be "value-neutral" or is curriculum best thought of as a tool of socialization, stratification and/or social change?
- o When designing a unit, which curricular approaches are best for specific subject areas?
- o What role do teaching methods such as constructivism, cooperative learning, and activity-based projects play in creating a sound learning environment? What is the proper role for traditional methods such as lecture, rote memorization, drilling, and direct instruction?
- o How can a teacher go about finding textbooks and other classroom materials which are able to meet state standards yet also reflect the teacher's pedagogical and social values?
- o What assumptions do we hold about how children learn? How can teachers encourage mindful learning and create independent, outside-the-box thinkers?
- o What does it mean to define your teacher identity as a facilitator of learning rather than as an expert with special wisdom to impart?

The purpose of this course is to critically examine these and other questions and encourage beginning teachers to think deeply about the implications of our work. This

class builds on the work of Education 301 yet successful participation in 301 is not required to gain entry into Education 303 this semester. Instead potential students need to maintain a strong interest in education as a career (teaching, coaching, professional training, popular education...), an eagerness to explore the complexities of classroom life, and an openness to participate in an ongoing examination of issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ability.

This class will immerse you in a rich mix of issues related to student learning, classroom dynamics, and teacher practice. Education 303 aims to encourage reflective teaching practice and a thorough understanding of curriculum theory, design, and planning. Through this class, it is hoped you will develop teaching habits which will carry over into your teaching career.

Expectations of Students

Class Attendance & Participation: Students are expected to attend each and every class and bring the week's assigned readings. This is especially important because the class meets only once a week and a missed class is equal to missing two standard classes. Credit will be deducted from the class participation section of the grade for every class missed or for times when materials are not brought to class. If you need to miss class and are concerned about the absence affecting your grade, please convince your dean that the absence should not be a cause for penalty and have her/him send me an email.

Participation will be graded based on a number of factors: engagement in class discussions and activities, willingness to take on leadership roles during exercises and activities, ability to ask and answer questions about the day's topic, participation in at least one office hours visit, and punctual attendance in class. Class attendance and participation constitute 10% of the final grade.

Office Hours: All students in Education 303 are required to make a brief office hours appointment during the first month of the semester. Students are also encouraged to attend office hours throughout the semester to discuss topics raised in the class, or seek help with assignments, study skills, academic or other matters. If scheduled times are not convenient, I am happy to schedule additional times to fit your schedule.

Team Teaching: Each student will be assigned to a team teaching group during the second or third week of class. Groups will be expected to conceptualize, plan, design, and teach a lesson of approximately 1 hour to our Education 303 class sometime during the semester. The lesson should be based on the readings for the week in which the team teaching will take place. The evaluation of your team teaching project will constitute 15% of the final grade.

Teach Two Lessons: Students will be expected to conceptualize, plan, design, and teach 2 lessons in your assigned K-12 classroom. These will be planned in consultation with the cooperating teacher. You will be expected to write up these two lessons and hand in a short report including sections on curricular theory related to the lesson, your lesson plan, your self-assessment, and the teacher's assessment. This should be no more than 5 pages for each lesson and the reports are due on February 24 and April 7. These reports constitute a total of 20% of your final grade.

Unit Plan. The major written assignment for the class involves preparing a Unit Plan which could be taught in the classroom to which you have been assigned. This is due any time before April 26 and information about expectations for this assignment will be passed out on February 24. This assignment represents 25% of your grade. The Unit Plan is a detailed curriculum unit on a specific topic and will represent a week's worth of lessons in one class. The Unit Plan will include an explanation and rationale for the unit as a whole and explanations and rationale for the daily lesson plans of which the unit is comprised.

Final Exam. There is a final exam for this class which will include short answers and essay questions. The essay questions will be assigned a week in advance and students will be expected to bring their completed answers to these questions to the exam on May 5. The in-class portion of the final exam will be the short-answers. This exam represents 30% of the final grade and students will be responsible for all class readings (including in-class handouts), and all lectures, activities, and discussions. The exam will be fair and students will be given adequate information to allow them to prepare. If you are absent from class for any reason during the semester, you must be sure another student in the class provides you with information and materials you missed...do not expect the professor to provide this service.

Please Note: It is important for all educators to have a firm grasp on standard English usage. Your written work for this class must use standard English and be grammatically correct. Students who do not write proper sentences, paragraphs, or use proper punctuation, capitalization, possessives, or organization should seek assistance or expect no more than a C on an assignment. Exceptions will be made for those students who need concentrated work on writing skills, but only if a plan is created and filed with me within the first two weeks of class indicating that you have made arrangements for assistance from the Writing Project.

Class Requirements, Deadlines, and Grading

o Class Attendance and Participation	10%
o Team Teaching Assignment	15%
o Two Reports of Lessons (due 2/24 and 4/7)	20%
o Unit Plan (due on 4/14 or before)	25%
o Final Exam (on 5/5)	30%

Readings

Education 303 has four required texts and a small course packet. Additional readings may be handed out in class. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss the readings in class. The required texts are:

- o Curriculum: The Teacher's Initiative, by John McNeil (Merrill / Prentice Hall)
- o Beyond Heroes and Holidays, by Enid Lee, D. Menkert, and Margo Okazawa-Rey (Network of Educators on the Americas)
- o The Power of Mindful Learning, by Ellen Langer (Addison-Wesley)
- o Maine Learning Results, available for \$2 at Ashby House (Education Department office)

The packet of additional course readings is also available at the bookstore. A copy of each of the required books, as well as a copy of the course packet, will be on reserve in the library.

Special Notes

The Writing Project at Bowdoin offers drop-in writing conferences in evening workshops. Trained people are available to help you develop your writing skills in the Writing Project office in 106 Sills. The project offers feedback on drafts of papers and assistance at any stage of the writing process. For information on times and locations look for the Writing Workshop bookmarks in the libraries and the Smith Union or call the project at 725-3760.

Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to check-in with me as soon as possible and also stop by the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs in Moulton Union to register for support services.

The Education Department hosts a monthly colloquium series on current issues in education. These are scheduled for February 11, March 11, and April 8 at 3 p.m. Your attendance is encouraged. The Brody Family Lecture this year will be given by Ellen Langer, whose book The Power of Mindful Learning we are reading this semester. It is scheduled for Thursday, April 29 in the evening and attendance by Education 303 students is *required*. Make plans now to attend this evening event.

Students in Education 303 are expected to check their e-mail accounts regularly as occasional messages will be sent to the entire class.

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SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Please note: changes may occur in this schedule during the semester. Assignments are due on the date they are listed.

Curriculum Theory

January 27 (W)
assignment for 1/27

Overview of Course
> Packet: John Dewey, "The Child and the Curriculum"

February 3 (W)
assignment for 2/3

Theoretical Perspectives on Curriculum
> Packet: George J. Posner, "Theoretical Perspectives on Curriculum"

Methods

February 10 (W)
assignment for 2/10

Constructivist & Activity Curricula
> Chapters 1-2 of McNeil

February 17 (W)
assignment for 2/17

Teaching as Social Change Work
> Chapters 3-4 of McNeil

Subject Areas

February 24 (W)
assignment for 2/24

Humanities and Social Studies
> Chapter 5 of McNeil
> 226-244, 255-273 in Lee, Menkert & Okazawa-Rey
> Team Teaching Group #1
> **Report on Lesson #1 Due**

March 3 (W)
assignment for 3/3

Mathematics and Science
> Chapter 6 of McNeil
> 300-328 in Lee, Menkert & Okazawa-Rey
> Team Teaching Group #2

Materials, Lesson Planning & Unit Design

March 10 (W)
assignment for 3/10

Textbooks and Standards
> Chapter 7-8 of McNeil
> Maine Learning Results
> Team Teaching Group #3

March 17 (W)
assignment for 3/17

Lesson Planning and Unit Design
> Chapters 9-10 of McNeil
> Team Teaching Group #4

Spring Break

How Does Learning Take Place?

April 7 (W)
assignment for 4/7

Mindful Learning: Theory
> First half of Langer
> Team Teaching Group #5
> **Report on Lesson #2 Due**

April 14 (W)
assignment for 4/28

Mindful Learning: Practice
> Second half of Langer
> Team Teaching Group #6

No Class on April 21

Class Summary

April 26 (M)

> **Unit Plan Due before 5 pm**

April 28 (W)
assignment for 4/14

Curriculum Theory Revisited
> Packet: Maxine Greene's "Curriculum and Consciousness"; Michael Apple's "Is There A Curriculum Voice to Reclaim"

April 29 (TH)

Education Department Lecture and Reception for Ellen Langer

May 5 (W)
assignment for 5/5

Summary, Evaluation & Final Exam
> **Final Exam**
> Universal Attendance is Required